HISTORY OF ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

DARIO COMPOSTA

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HISTORY
OF
ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

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PREFACE

Some may ask me why yet another work on ancient Western philosophy is being published. I immediately respond that this book was not written in order to provide a manual for high school.[1] In Italy, classical culture is in the throes of a constant and slow decline, and hence a book like this would be rejected in principle, even without knowing its style and orientation. Nor do I write this for university students whose professors have assigned them a cursory study of Western thought. Very well-written and recent introductions to Greek philosophy already exist, such as Arthur H. Armstrong's *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy*, translated into Italian by Vittoria Moloni de Vio (Il Mulino, Bologna 1983, pp. 309) and entitled *Introduzione alla filosofia antica*. However, these are short and essential books which inform, but which do not allow the student to truly enter philosophy. I also exclude a third type of work from my considerations, that is, the great treatises with anthological selections offering a large panorama for a highly specialised study. This latter type of book is beyond the reach of this work. In Italy, this latter style is exemplified by Giovanni Reale's five-volume work *Storia della filosofia antica*.

I also do not take into consideration works studying particular periods, such as the interesting essay of F. W. Walbank on the Hellenistic period entitled *The Hellenistic World*, translated by Marco Fantuzzi, Il Mulino (Bologna, 1983), under the title Il *mondo ellenistico* (pp. 303). This latter work has a political accentuation, while another accurate miscellaneous study was published in Zurich in 1983, entitled *Die Philosophie der Antike*, with three essays written by different specialists: H. Krämer ("Die Alter Akademie", pp. 1–151), Hellmut Flashar ("Aristoteles", pp. 175–448) and Fritz Wehrli ("Der Peripatos bis zum Beginn der Römischen Kaiserzeit", pp. 559 ff.). I also partially utilised specific researches such as: *Human Value, A Study in Ancient Philosophical Ethics* by John Rist, Leiden 1982; Yvon Lafrance, *La théorie platoniciene de la doxa*, Montréal-Paris, 1981; Ibid., *Méthode et exégèse en histoire de la philosophie*, Montréal-Paris 1983; W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy, Aristotle: An Encounter*, Cambridge, 1981 (however, I was not able to consult the latter in its entirety). Of some small use is Louis Gernet's volume *Antropologia della Grecia antica*, translated into Italian in Milan, 1983; this work is dedicated to social and sociological problems, with little reference to philosophical thought.

It was not possible for me to directly consult the works of the great specialists regarding pagan religiosity during the Roman Empire, collected in "La soteriologia dei culti orientali nell'Impero Romano", *Acts of the International Conference on the Soteriology of Eastern Cults in the Roman Empire*, edited by Ugo Bianchi and Maarten J. Vermaseren, Leiden 1982. This was a continuation of the conference held in 1966 in Messina. However, I did consult the four volumes of my colleague and friend, Rev. Prof. M. Erbetta, on gnostic texts translated into Italian, which were published by the Marietti publishers of Turin (1964–1981).

We have the translation of all of Copleston's large works, including the two volumes on the history of ancient philosophy, which could be termed as having a goal near to that of this volume. However, Copleston's works are too diffuse for a university course. In reality, I decided to write a metaphysical work of history, a field I have examined and contemplated for many years. In 1960 a work of mine was published in two editions by the Pontifical Salesian University, and supplies were quickly exhausted. In 1980 I decided to publish a summary of those notes, adding to them the scientific, bibliographical and historical acquisitions of the last few decades. However, the conciseness of the book was such that my students at the Pontifical Urban University, where I have taught for 16 years, convinced me to return to my old book and to revise and retouch it where required by advances in historiography.

Having justified the purpose of this volume, I ask forgiveness of those scholars who have not been quoted or mentioned; but, obviously, every work not only has accomplishments, but also limits.

Rome, 6 January 1985

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INTRODUCTION

Geographical area
includes;
Persian Gulf to the Atlantic
North Africa to the Alps.

The history of ancient Western philosophy includes a geographic area stretching roughly from the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic and from North Africa to the Alps. The temporal extension embraces more than a millennium, from the seventh century before Christ until 529 A.D., when Emperor Justinian decreed the closing of the Neo-Platonic school of Athens.

This philosophy was not born in Greece, but in the eastern colonies of Ionia or Anatolia; later it developed in the western colonies of Magna Graecia in southern Italy. Only later in Athens did this philosophy find a terrain for its extraordinary development; and in this period it exercised a decisive influence not only on the ancients, but also on Christian and Islamic philosophy. The duration of this philosophy and its expansion as far as India in the seventh through twelfth centuries made it a universal philosophy.[2] This universality is even more evident today if we consider the fact that modern European philosphy, the descendant of its ancient European counterpart, tends to place itself above regional philosophies, even the illustrious and ancient ones of India and China.

Therefore, the names "Western philosophy" or "Greek" or "Mediterranean philosophy" are equivalent but improper expressions with a variety of meanings. It is necessary[3] to approach this philosophy by outlining: (1) the sources, or the documents allowing us to establish its origins and development; (2) the cultural causes which provoked the beginnings of philosophical reflection; and (3) the historical periods, or the partitioning of periods throughout its history. Indeed, the historical design of ancient Western philosophy is rather an overturned painting, where a certain thread or unitary movement is visible with various colourations.

1. *Sources*

The study of the history of ancient philosophy must take into account both the writings of *philosophers* and the documents of Greek *historians*, who worked from the fourth century B.C. gathering information and sewing together the fabric of philosophical theories in that era.

It can undoubtedly be affirmed that beginning from the seventh century, we do not possess any complete work of philosophers who lived before Socrates; Socrates himself did not author any works. Of Aristotle, the greatest of Plato's students, there remain a majority of works, even if the essays of his youth have been lost.

Today various documentation exists of later philosophical schools such as Epicureanism, Stoicism and Pyrrhonism. Only three of Epicurus' letters have survived. The rest of his enormous production has been lost. Lucretius, Roman poet of the first century B.C. and author of the celebrated poem *De rerum natura*, is only an illustrator of the Epicurean message. Another personage who restated Epicurean doctrines was a certain Diogenes of Oenoanda (a town of Asia Minor), whose teachings were discovered at the end of the nineteenth century during archaeological excavations of the local theatre entrance hall. We should also mention Philodemus of Gadara from the first century before Christ. Conspicuous fragments of his Epicurean doctrines were found in the excavations of Herculanum, the city buried by Vesuvius in 79 A.D.

Mere fragments have been preserved from ancient Stoicism; only with Seneca (2–67 A.D.), Epictetus (50–120 A.D.) and

Emperor Marcus Aurelius (121–180 A.D.) do we find complete works of philosophy. These, however, already bear the mark of newer ideas. Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 B.C.) professed a form of eclectic Platonism, but we also find traces of Stoicism and other ancient doctrines in his works.

The third Hellenistic school, Pyrrhonism, did not extend itself like preceding schools. Its cultivators left fragments of notably competent philosophical works: for example, Antigonus of Charistus, who lived after the founder, Pyrrho of Elis. Instead, we possess the complete works of another follower (from the second) century A.D.), Sextus Empiricus (whose greatest activity stretched from 180–210 A.D.). His writings and critiques are a precious source of knowledge.

Moving to the period from the third through sixth centuries, dominated by Neo-Platonism, we possess the work of its founder, Plotinus of Lycopolis in Egypt (204–269 A.D.), the *Enneads*. We also have many writings of his school: those of Porphyry of Tyre (232–304?), Iamblichus (?–330 A.D.), Proclus (410–485 A.D.), etc.

In addition to the philosophers, it is necessary to mention the *historians* of ancient philosophy. In fact, their works were not only a first attempt to write a history of ancient philosophy, but they also offer documentary material which is often not found in the philosophers' works.

We may begin with Xenophon (440–350? B.C.), a disciple of Socrates who wrote (among other works) the *Memorabilia*. Theophrastus, a disciple of Aristotle (360?–288? B.C.) first began to write a history of philosophy with the lost work *Physicorum Opiniones* using as a criterion not the biographical description of philosophers, but the succession of their doctrines. This method was called "doxographic" i.e. an exposition of philosophical theories. This style was imitated by a certain Aëtius of the first and second centuries A.D., who wrote an "anthology of philosophical opinions" known as the *Vetusta Placita* in Latin. It is doubtful whether the *Anthology* should be attributed to an anonymous author today called the Pseudo-Plutarch. Aëtius inspired the fifth-century Stobaeus, who wrote *Excerpts, Sayings and Precepts Deriving from Aëtius*.

Theophrastus' doxography was used by Clement of Alexandria in his *Stromata* (150–214? A.D.) and by Hippolytus of the Roman Clergy, whose *Refutation of all Heresies* or *Philosophumena* discovered in their entirety in 1842, permit a deeper look into ancient philosophy.

A strictly *biographical* method was followed for the first time by Sotion of Alexandria (second century B.C.), when he used the exposition of "successions" of schools ("diadochái" in Greek). He was imitated by Philodemus, but above all by Diogenes Laërtius, whose work *Lives of Philosophers* has been preserved in its entirety. This work, despite its superficiality, misstatements and banality, is an indispensable document for the history of Western philosophy, since the narration is from as early as the second or third century A.D.[4]

2. *Cultural Influences as Causes of Ancient Philosophy*

The fact that ancient Western philosophy was born in the western regions of today's Turkey (then called Ionia) raises some questions concerning the cultural values which later gave birth to this philosophy.

We know that around the sixteenth century B.C., the Greeks of southern Greece or Argolis (whom today we call Dorians) sought lands for expansion. They first reached the southern coast of Anatolia and took the name Achaeans[5] and then colonised Rhodes, Cyprus (whence they took the Greek-Phoenician alphabet) and Crete, founding the Micene civilisation on the ruins of the previously flowering Minoan civilisation. They then expanded into Palestine, taking the names of Philistines ("Pursta"), but they accepted the language of the conquered Cananeans. From there they directed military campaigns against Egypt while allied with the Libyans, but in 1213 B.C. they suffered a grave defeat at the hands of the Pharaoh Marneptah.

Instead, other Greeks, around the twelfth century, departing from Beothia or Thessalia, invaded not only the northern coast of Ionia (which they named "Yavan"), but they pushed inland and destroyed the powerful Hittite empire (which is also mentioned in the Bible). Achaeans and Ionians were gradually fused into one ethnic and linguistic group, attached to the motherland. Still, these colonists had constant contact with non-Aryans; and hence they were culturally influenced by the Phoenicians, Egyptians, Assyro-Babylonians, etc. The mythical Greek campaign guided by King Agamennon for the conquest of Troy, celebrated by Homer in the ninth century B.C., refers to this ancient work, which left profound traces in the memories of later Ionian generations.

The results of these contacts were extraordinary: the development of lyric and epic poetry, technological (especially naval) development, and the birth of sciences. Based on this lively culture, philosophy itself was soon born. Still, it remains an open question regarding how much Ionian (and generally Greek) thought was influenced by the East.

Today, there are three prevalent theses. The first holds that Ionian philosophy, and Greek thought in general, was directly produced by Eastern philosophies or cultures. For example, Aristotle, in his lost work *Philosophy* (probably written in 348 B.C.), stated that Greek philosophy was derived from the Egyptians and Persians, especially from Zoroastrianism, the religion of fire. Later the neo-Pythagorean philosopher Numenius, who lived around the first century A.D., considered Plato to be the "Moses speaking Greek" and thus held that Greek philosophy was derived from Israel's religion. In the second century the writer Lucianus of Samosata (120–180 A.D.) pronounced his opinion in favour of India. In the nineteenth century this opinion enjoyed the enthusiastic support of two German philologists, Gladisch and Röth. Still, this opinion, even if it is suggestive, is not based on solid argument.[6]

The second thesis, diametrically opposed to the first, states that the "miracle" of Greek philosophy is to be considered the autonomous creation of Greek genius. In ancient times this was supported by Diogenes Laertius (third century A.D.) and more recently by F. G. Hegel (1770–1831) and Edward Zeller (1814–1908). In our times this opinion has also been shared by Werner Jäger in his excellent essay *Paideia – The Formation of the Greek Man* (translated into Italian by N. Abbagnano in *Storia della filosofia*, I, Turin 1953), and others. Still, this opinion does not take into account the influence, albeit indirect, exercised on Ionian and Greek culture by the East.

The third thesis, which we support, states that Ionian philosophy and its later counterparts in Magna Graecia and Athens was born on a terrain which, although it was Greek, was derived in part from the East; that is, from Phoenician writings, Egyptian mathematics and Sumerian astronomy[7].

3. *Religion and Philosophy*

There is no doubt that religion gave to the first Ionian thinkers and to later philosophers some symbolic schemes in order to facilitate a reconsideration of the universe's origin (the problem of the One and the many) as a strictly philosophical question. However, the Hellenic religion does not offer a unified nucleus of beliefs; in general, the Homeric, Olympian and Orphic religions are distinguished from each other. The first can be defined as an aristocratic aesthetic naturalism, in that the divinity is but a mythical divinisation of natural forces through symbols of superior human beings. These superior personages were worshipped, and official feasts were dedicated to them; these were first promoted by the princes (tenth through fifth centuries B.C.) and later by the democratic "polis", according to local traditions. The cult of the twelve divinities, with Zeus at the head, the national sanctuaries (especially those at Delphi to Apollo, at Athens to Athena, and at Asclepius to Epidaurus) were expressions of an exterior religiosity not sustained by a true faith or religious pathos. This religion had no dogmas and was hence exposed to contamination and evolution. There was no moral sense and no purifying obligations. It was not conceivable that the religious work was revealed (as in Judaism and Christianity), and hence true love of neighbour and divine grace were ignored.

The Orphic religion (attributed to the mythical Thracian singer Orpheus) was popular in the countryside and was based on the myth of the god Zagreus or Bacchus, who was probably from the East and was born and died for humanity, later to be reborn with every cycle of nature. Hence arose the concept of man's participation in divine things ("divinisation"), the belief in the soul's immortality, the liturgical value of Bacchian rites (at first reserved only to women or "bacchants" or "Menads"). Still, these beliefs did not pose ethical problems and reduced themselves to mystical orgiastic experiences.[8]

Neither form of religiosity had defined dogmas, nor were they codified in canonical books, nor did they include a sacerdotal hierarchy.[9] Hence we see the liberal critique of religion (Xenophanes), its negation (the Sophists, Evemerus), or its capacity to transform itself into a "lay" religion (Hellenistic period) or into astral cults (imperial Roman period).

Alongside the two religions, there flowered the so-called "mysteries", or local cults (such as the Panathenea, the Nemea and the Eleusine Mysteries), which were a compromise between the Olympian and Orphic religions.[10]

However, since the Olympian religion was transmitted in the Hellenic world through the national poem the "Iliad" of Homer, it could be stated that the Greek man's formation was radically religious. Education, arts and religion made up a unity of values for the Greek soul. However, this simplification of the problem of religion's influence on philosophy has some difficulties which have been raised by modern scholars. True, everyone admits that at the origins of Greek philosophy there rests a certain religious or mystic experience;[11] but, some also hold that philosophy was the passage from "the myth to the logos" in a continuous detachment which culminated in a kind of positivistic or illuministic lay thought.[12]

This thesis is refuted by two certain facts regarding the beginnings of philosophical thought: a) the religiosity of all the pre-Socratic philosophers, including Xenophanes, as we shall discuss later; b) the religiosity of Hippocrates' medical science.[13] Regarding the relation between religion and philosophy after Socrates, we may now state (as will be explained in greater detail later) that this rapport was a continuous mutual exchange of theses and hypotheses. The atheistic Sophistic parentheses did not have a substantial influence on the religiosity of Greek philosophy.

To conclude, religion represents the primary factor for the emergence of philosophy. Art, science, social organisation, and legislation enter into the philosophical-cultural circle less prominently once philosophy was already born.

4. *Historical Periods*

Before beginning an exposition of Greek philosophy and a history of its development through twelve centuries of history, it is necessary to determine the periods characterising its variations and development. This is not only a convenient educational step, but also a criterion of internal individualisation.

Already in ancient times, Diogenes Laertius (III, 56) had divided the history of Greek thought into three categories: physical (from the beginnings until Plato); logical (or dialectical – from Plato to Hellenism); and ethical (the period following) philosophy. Recently, some scholars have taken recourse to *extrinsic criteria*; for example, Paul Tannery (*Pour l'histoire de la science hellènique*, Paris 1887) considered the political leaps represented by great personages decisive: a) first period, from Darius King of Persia to Alexander the Great (323 B.C.); b) second period, from Alexander to Augustus (7 A.D.); c) third period, from Augustus to Constantine (327 A.D.; and d) fourth period, from Constantine to Justinian-Heraclius (sixth century). In this way four philosophical directions are obtained: the properly Hellenic one, the Hellenistic, the Greco-Roman and the Byzantine. Without doubt the scheme is suggestive for its symmetry (three centuries per period) and the individualisation of philosophical direction for each period. Still, the defect is that the episodes are established outside the process of Greek thought itself.

Two others who also took on external criteria were German philologists of the nineteenth centuries, Ast and Rixner, who divided Greek philosophy according to racial characteristics: the realism of the Ionians, Italian idealism and Attic synthesis.

Internal criteria are more credible, even if they are suggested by particular ideologies or doctrinal whims. For example, G. F. Hegel, following his dialectic triadism, divides ancient Western philosophy into a naturalistic period, from Thales to Aristotle; an anthropological period from Epicurus to the last Academy (first century B.C.); and finally, a theological period from the neo-Pythagoreans until the neo-Platonic conclusion of Greek and Latin philosophy. This attempt, although interesting, is not totally convincing: how can we assert that Socrates and Plato were naturalists?

Theodore Gomperz, with his positivistic premise, articulated the development of Greek philosophy as follows: I) metaphysical period from Thales to Pythagoras; II) scientific period from the Eleatics to Empedocles; III) illuministic period of the Sophists; IV) Socratic period; etc. Still, we must ask ourselves in what sense the Ionians were metaphysicians and the Eleatics scientists.

These examples could be multiplied, always with approximative and unsatisfactory results caused by the objective complexity of historical data and authors' preferences. In our opinion, an internal and objectively well-founded criterion is inspired by the prevalence of one of the many cultural factors on philosophy. The prevalence of religion determines the period from Thales to the Sophists in a fairly homogenous manner. The Sophists and Atomists underwent a significant crisis with the eclipse of both religion and Eleatic metaphysics; and they were particularly influenced by art (especially Greek tragedy). The third period may be called metaphysical, in that it is dominated by an equilibrium of four cultural factors: religion, art, politics and science, in an ideal tension toward the

Absolute. Following this was the fourth period of Hellenistic and Roman humanism, in which prevailed at times an anti-religious interest (Epicureans), science (the peripatetic School of Alexandria), politics (Pyrrhonism) or religion (Stoics). The fifth period, that of the neo-Platonics, is marked by a profound influence of the Eastern religions, and extends from the third through the sixth centuries A.D.

This is the outline which we will follow in the following exposition.

PART ONE

FROM THALES TO THE ATOMISTS AND THE SOPHISTS

FIRST PERIOD

PRIMITIVE COSMOLOGY

CHAPTER ONE

THE IONIAN SCHOOL

1. *Introduction*

The first period, as we observed above, is notable for the influence of religion; this period lasted from the seventh through the fifth centuries B.C. This period includes the Ionian, Pythagorean and Eleatic philosophers, along with Empedocles, Heraclitus, Anaxagoras and their followers. The fact that this philosophy developed in both Ionia and Italy indicates not only geographical variety, but also a variety of directions. Nevertheless, a common tendency of the so-called "schools" ("thyasoi" in Greek) remains, which some scholars correctly compare to a form of groups associated in fraternities or secret societies.[14] That is, we have here an exoteric conception of philosophy, which includes a privileged and often mystical initiation[15] reserved to religious corporations.

This religiosity does not imply a strict adherence to myth (be it Homeric or Orphic), but a rational interpretation of myth which arises (as M. Gentile correctly observed)[16] from an analysis of reality or "historia", and which transfigures theogony into cosmogony through either a partial (scientific) or total (philosophical) explanation. In this fashion the myth, without being negated, is taken as a symbol or a number which stimulates thought reflection, so that a more profound sense of reality may be discovered.

The first school, called Ionian, was active in Miletus for about fifty years. It grew during an especially prosperous time in the history of that city.[17] The three philosophers: Thales (624–546 B.C.), Anaximander (610–530) and Anaximenes (596–548) are called " hylozoists" or "panpsychists" by contemporary historians. That is, they are considered thinkers who hold that "matter" ("hyle") is living ("zoé"), or that the universe ("pân") is animate ("psyché"). However, in ancient documents they are called the "Milesians", those from Miletus, or "Ionians" because they were born in the southern region of Ionia, called Caria, where the Greek element became confused with the advent of immigrants from Phoenicia and Cyprus. Aristotle called them "physiológoi", or scholars of nature, with nature being understood here in its global sense as the sum of beings.

We can observe in Thales a prevalence of interest in or adherence to myth; in Anaximander we see philosophical research; in Anaximenes we encounter scientific research. To review, we would say that the hierarchy of values is as follows: in Thales, R(eligion), P(hilosophy), S(cience); in Anaximander the order is PSR; in Anaximenes, SPR.

The uncertainty of sources[18] explains the variety of interpretations concerning these philosophers. These interpretations range from those assigning primacy to science to the point where the Ionians become materialistic cosmologists and agnostic naturalists (Zeller, Tannery, Burnet, Guthrie, Gomperz, Maddalena, etc.),[19] to those placing the accent on religiosity and mysticism, so that the Ionians become researchers seeking to deepen the presence of the divine ("tò Theîon") in the world (Joel, Cornford, Mondolfo, Jager, etc.).[20] Our belief rests between the above extremes; and we affirm that, without negating the importance of scientific research (in the first thesis) or the desire for the divine (in the second thesis), these philosophers reveal a philosophical intent.

2. *Philosophical Character of the Ionian School*

The Greek word "philo-sophia", love of wisdom, was used by the historian Herodotus when referring to Solon, one of the seven sages: Thales, Biantes, Pittacus, Solon, Cleobule, Mison and Chilon. However, it was first used as a technical term (as Cicero attests in the *Disput. Tusculanae* 5, 3, 7–9) by Pythagoras. In reality, the first mention in our sources is found in Heraclitus, as we have seen. Nevertheless, the three Ionians were doubtless philosophers, given the fact that Aristotle called Thales an "initiator of philosophy". The text:

> "The majority of those who philosophised before thought that the principles of all things were only material . . . . Nevertheless, these philosophers do not agree about the number and the species of this principle [arché]. Thales, initiator [archegós] of this type of philosophy, states that the principle is water" (*Metaphysics* A, I, 983 b 6–20).

This testimony of Aristotle is supported by other arguments. First of all, Thales, while appearing in the list of seven sages, is the first to be commonly considered in the sources as a philosopher. That is, the "sophia" of the seven sages was merely a moral knowledge or practical righteousness. "Philo-sophia", instead, was a critical-speculative wisdom.[21] While ancient religion does not explain, but only affirms, philosophy, surpassing scientific verifications, ascends to the supreme cause – the "arché". This principle is not identified with the phenomena of direct experience (water, air, fire) as they are manifested in the world of the senses: rain, liquid, wind, flames, embers, sun, etc. Behind these, a reality is sought to bind them together and to explaing them,[22] which is a material, formal and efficient cause.

Another fact confirms the critical character of the Ionian school: the fraternity or scholarly community. If it is true that Thales possessed Phoenician blood on his mother's side (Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives*, I, 1, 22) and was thus inclined to seafaring adventures and empirical researches, he nevertheless, together with Anaximander and Anaximenes, lived in a unity of intent (*Ibid.*, II, 2, 3), as a teacher does with his disciples. This means that popular fables and Homeric mythologies were not sufficient for philosophical and scientific research. In fact, fables and myths are passively received and transmitted. Instead, common research implies a dedication to critique. Indeed, Anaximander is called a "successor and disciple of Thales" (*Diels*, A, 9), and his "co-citizen and companion [hetaîros]" (*Diels*, A, 17); or, as Cicero states, "popularis et sodalis" (*Acc. Post.* II, 118). Anaximenes "heard Anaximander" (*Ibid.*, A, 1) and was the latter's "companion" (*Ibid.*, A, 5). Still, their common philosophical reflection was not directed in a direction opposite that of religiosity. As M. Pohlenz observed, contrary to Greece, which in the seventh century B.C. was overwhelmed by Orphic cults and Eleusine mysteries, in Ionia "the Hellenic spirit developed in another direction".[23] The Ionians posed the problem of the origin of things to themselves. The response provided by the three philosophers does not come – as in the case of Hesiod – from theogonies, but from the research of a primordial element which rests at the foundation of every being.

3. *Thales*

Little is known of his life. Even the dates of his birth and death are uncertain. He certainly travelled to Egypt, as can be read in Diogenes Laërtius; and he visited the great centres of Lydia, a powerful kingdom then allied with Miletus and all Ionia. Various works are attributed to him: for example, *Nautical Astrology*, *The Solstice and the Equinox*, *The Principles*, and even a treatise entitled *On Nature*. Today, however, the majority of authors attribute these works to other philosophers.[24] It is significant that Diels gathered only testimonials, but no fragments. We possess copious accounts of his scientific researches which attest to his interest in mathematics[25] and astronomy.[26]

His philosophy is concerned with the metaphysical question of "the One and the many"; that is, how the multiplicity of beings may be resolved in a unity. This he sought to do not with an ideal formula,[27] but with a real principle. Multiplicity is expressed by

Aristotle with the word "physis" and unity with the word "arché" (*Metaphysics* I, A, 983 b).

We may ask ourselves what "physis" meant to Thales, as it was transcribed into technical terms by Aristotle. The response is as we outlined it in paragraph 2 above. For the materialistic interpretation we can quote Theodore Gomperz, who, after having affirmed Thales' detachment from myth, salutes him as "a happy precursor of Lavoisier".[28] In order to remain within the modest limits furnished by Aristotle,[29] we can say that the point of departure for philosophical research were beings ("tà ónta") as they appear in their entirety.[30] This totality is not to be understood as a heap of neutral atoms lacking movement, but as extension and life; this is an animistic vision of reality. Therefore, in a famous phrase Aristotle attributes to Thales, it is stated that "all things are full of gods" (*De Anima* 411 a 7), and hence the "physis" is something divine ("theîon"), both in its being and its change.[31]

At this point Thales is presented with the metaphysical problem of the "arché". Note that the search for this principle does not imply the question of creation (a concept extraneous to all Greek thought), but the determination of that entity in which the "physis" is resolved without exiting from itself. Thales surpasses mythology (which attributed the origin of things to Oceanus, the god of the ocean). He states that even Oceanus and Tethis vow on the ocean. Therefore, water is the primordial principle, and hence all things (the "physis") *were water* ("arché") and *are water* ("physis"). Therefore, "arché" does not indicate the origin as the beginning, but as the "sustaining principle or material cause". The water, however, is not a god, but a thing. It is a thing not as a myth (Oceanus), not as an Empedoclean element (one of the four elements of ancient chemistry), not as H_2O, but wet as the ultimate reality. Aristotle specifies that this principle is unique, undefined ("àpeiron"), and Simplicius even said that it is "connective" of the "physis". (*Phys.* 23, 21).

As we can see, what we have is only a first reflection, but one that is full of philosophical implications. To say any more would probably surpass the few things that we know.[32]

4. *Anaximander*

Anaximander, disciple of Thales, lived (it seems) about 64 years (614–540). As was the case with his teacher, he participated in political life; but it is not believed that he travelled extensively. Perhaps he travelled to Sparta to construct a sundial (or "gnomon"); this shows his fervid scientific curiosity and a knowledge of Eastern cultures, since this instrument was in use in Babylonia. He was also a great lover of philosophy, having written the first Western work on philosophy, entitled *De natura* ("Peri physeos" in Greek). Simplicius, an Aristotelic commentator of the sixth century A.D., preserved the only fragment we now possess, which says: "Whence things derive their birth, there is necessarily performed their dissolution; indeed, the penalty and the guilt of injustice are reciprocally paid, according to the temporal order" (*Diels*, B, 1).

As we stated above in paragraph 2, Anaximander was the least attentive of the three Milesians to religious problems. His mind was open, above all, to philosophy and science. For this scientific knowledge he always enjoyed the admiration of the educated class,[33] even if his language is bound to archaic imaginary schemes and an almost primitive mentality.[34] His scientific intuitions require a more detailed exposition.[35]

Anaximander's philosophical thought regards the problem of the One and the many – that is, the origin of the visible and changeable universe from a principle ("arché"). This is how Simplicius expresses Anaximander's thought:

> "Anaximander of Miletus . . . affirmed that the principle ("arché") and element of things is the "ápeiron", first introducing the term "principle"; and, he stated that it was neither water nor any of the other things called elements, but

another infinite nature ("physis") from which all the heavens and their universes come" (*Diels*, A, 19).

Compared to Thales, Anaximander takes a step forward. The principle contains and directs the elements, like the water, the earth and the fire; but it is not confused with these same elements. Yes, he admitted that from the mire come fish and from the fish come men, through evolution. In this fashion he seemed to state that the inferior principle (water) produces partial effects. However, in this, as likewise in other cases, there is no true distinction between cause and effect. Therefore, a supreme principle is necessary, one distinct from inferior causes and effects. But what is this supreme principle called the "àpeiron"? Anaximander determines its meaning with religious attributes: it is primordial, divine ("to theîon"), immobile, not generated, immutable, venerable, an absolute justice which attributes a just recompense to inferior causes and effects.

Obviously, we are faced with a grandiose and religious concept of the universe; but this concept remains somewhat obscure. Even more obscure and complex is the explanation proposed by sources for the derivation of inferior causes-effects, which are infinite worlds in Anaximander's cosmology. The testimony of sources represents the process in ethical-religious terms. The infinite worlds proceed from the "àpeiron" through contraries: cold-hot, wet-dry; but, emerging as existent, they perform an act of rebellion or guilt toward the principle, in that they emerge in time as a challenge to the infinite. They also perform an act of injustice toward their contrary, because they war against the contrary in order to suppress and extinguish it. This struggle of contraries occurs "in the order of time" (*Diels*, B, 1), cyclically but inexorably in an eternal succession before the immobility of the "àpeiron", which "embraces and directs everything" (*Diels*, A, 15).

This metaphysical, but symbolic, language lends itself to a variety of interpretations. The principal of these are: a) a materialistic view, according to which the "àpeiron" is identified with force-matter;[36] b) an ethical-cosmic perspective, according to which the "àpeiron" should be understood as a judge of universal history;[37] c) a religious interpretation, in which the "àpeiron" would be the terminus of a theological demonstration: infinite worlds postulate an infinite principle; therefore, this principle is divine;[38] d) an existentialist view, according to which the "àpeiron" of Anaximander should be understood in the primitive context of the Iliad within Homer's prophetic mentality. Therefore, this principle is the shepherd of beings which rest with it; their "disconnection" ("adikìa") is a form of non-permanence and fragility in time. Hence, they cannot persevere in the house of being, so they give each other the right to remain existent.[39]

Of the four interpretations, the third seems most plausible. We present it according to our point of view, working from the affirmation of the "àpeiron" as the principle ("arché") which must be infinite; hence, its divine character follows. This is the demonstration. *We begin with the existence of diverse beings* ("ónta", "àpanta") – in fact, of infinite worlds (Plutarch). Their fragility in time *requires a principle* ("arché"), to be understood not as a beginning (creation), but as an eternal uncaused cause, co-eternal with beings, but distinct from these same beings. In fact, the principle is not "any of the elements" (*Diels*, A, 9);[40] hence, the principle is not identified with time, but it entwines time and is equivalent to time.

In order for this to be a principle or cause of all reality, and in order that it "embrace" reality ("periéchei"), it must *be indefinite (unlimited)* in time and space. Indeed, infinite worlds and infinite time require a super-infinite cause. However, this cause is not a spectator of things' becoming; it is a tribunal keeping equilibrium and order amid the tumultuous flux. Justice is rendered not because birth and death are to be considered an apostasy from the "àpeiron" (Nietzsche's interpretation), but it is rendered because one being suppresses another and takes away another's existence. It follows that *this "unlimited"* is divine in a still-uncertain sense; the Greek neutral "tò theîon" does not allow us to give it personality, freedom or spirituality.[41]

5. *Anaximenes*

Little is known of Anaximenes, a disciple of Anaximander. Even his philosophical doctrine has reached us through testimonials from various sources. Nonetheless, it seems certain that he, taking empirical observation as the instrument of philosophical research, altered his master's teaching. On the one hand, he rejects the thesis of an "àpeiron" distinct from phenomena; on the other hand, he attributes the characteristic of infinity or boundlessness to an empirical element – the air, which is the "arché" in that it is unlimited ("àpeiros aér"), as it appears to us in the context of the atmosphere and the heavens.

This transposition of the unlimited from a distinct "arché" to air was suggested to Anaximenes by vital phenomena. Indeed, the soul, which is breath, sustains the body and gives it life. Vital air condenses and rarefies in such a way that all forms of becoming require no other principles. This biological model is transferred by Anaximenes to the concept of the universe and astronomical phenomena. Through condensation, hot air is transformed into rain, clouds and fog; lightning from the heavens is merely inflamed air. On the contrary, through the earth's rarefaction (note that the earth is no longer considered as a cylinder suspended in a vacuum, as Anaximander proposed, but as a flat floating body) vapors and exhalations rise toward the celestial vault. Therefore, in this scientific-philosophical theory we seem to implicitly sense an echo of the myth of the cosmic egg.

To conclude, the air is the "arché", but it is invisible, "close to incorporeal" (*Diels*, B, 3) and makes itself visible through heat, cold, wetness and movement.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PYTHAGOREAN OR ITALIAN SCHOOL

1. *The Pythagorean Problem*

Ionian philosophy moved into southern Italy through a chance event, through the work of Pythagoras, who founded a celebrated school of enormous importance for the development of Western thought. However, the historical figure of the founder and the events of the philosophical-religious society are marred by historical uncertainties, which even today divide the interpreters of his message and even his doctrine. The difficulties emerge from the three biographies of Pythagoras and from the history of the school, which underwent various influences and oriented itself toward diverse theories.

In chronological order, the biographies were written by Diogenes Laërtius (VIII, 1–50), Porphyry (233–305 A.D.) and Iamblichus (240–330 A.D.). We possess these three in their entirety, contrary to earlier writings traced back to the fourth century before Christ. These earlier writings consider the general doctrines of the school (for example, the fragments of Timaeus of Locri from the fourth century, and of Dicaearchus and Aristoxenus, contemporaries of Aristotle), but we possess them only in scarce and uncertain glimpses. The three biographies are not completely credible for three reasons: a) they were written about 800 years after Pythagoras' death, based on sources which were not always believable; b) they were written with Philo-Pythagorean intent, both to give importance to neo-Pythagoreanism (which flowered again from the first century B.C. to the fourth century A.D.) and to combat more recent theories with presumably more ancient teachings; c) the biographies were written when a dying paganism sought to stop the inexorable advance of Christianity, and thus the works compared a man like Pythagoras to the figure of Jesus; attributed to Pythagoras were miracles, bi-locations and apparitions, as can be seen most vividly in the fiction-like biography of Iamblichus.

Other difficulties are raised by the ancient school,[42] which numbered about 30 disciples. Today we possess a few fragments and some testimonials regarding them.[43] The most prominent members among them who professed different doctrines were: Philolaus of Tarentum (fifth century B.C.), a contemporary of Socrates, who supposedly first revealed the secrets of Pythagorean doctrine, taught a mystical philosophy; Timaeus of Locri, an historian from Magna Graecia; Alcmeon of Kroton, a physician with materialistic tendencies (Diogenes Laërtius, VIII, 83); Archytas, seven times strategus of Tarentum for his political gifts, a scholar of mechanics, mathematics and geometry, and a friend of Plato; Dicaearchus and Aristoxenus, who lived in the times of Aristotle and were historians and scientists; Lysias of Tarentum, who travelled in the fourth century B.C. to Greece and tutored Epaminondas, the famous leader of Thebes who died in 362.

From these statements some questions arise: was Pythagoras truly a historical personage? If he was, why do his followers have such disparate views? How may we assume a common origin? Various answers have been given to this "Pythagorean question", and they can be reduced to three basic ones: one negative, one a reduction and one moderately positive.

The first thesis was professed by E. Zeller, I. Burnet and E. Rhode; it doubts or negates outright the historical existence of Pythagoras' personage. Rhode, for example, sustains that only Dicaearchus wrote a life story of Pythagoras, inventing a model for life as a pretext for spreading his ideas. However, this thesis has been rejected (for solid reasons, we believe) by A. Rostagni and Cornelia De Vogel.[44]

A second hypothesis, while admitting that Pythagoras was an historical personage, restructures his teaching. For example, Erik Frank (*Plato and die sogenannten Pythagoreer*, Halle 1923) sustains that Pythagoras was the founder of a religious, not a philosophical, sect, and that his mysticism of numbers later provoked a scientific direction. A third thesis, which we support along with various other authors,[45] states that Pythagoras was also a philosopher, as we shall demonstrate. Still, the problem remains regarding the development of his school in a philosophical and later scientific direction; however, we shall discuss this later.

2. *Pythagoras: his Historical Existence and his Life*

Although it is true that Aristotle never mentions Pythagoras, but only the "so-called Pythagoreans",[46] we nonetheless do find explicit mentions of Pythagoras. For example, fragment B 40 (in Diels) of Heraclitus denounces Pythagoras' "polymathia", together with that of Xenophanes and Hecataeus. It is probably true that Parmenides referred to him or his immediate disciples when, in fragment VI, he attacks "the men with two heads . . . mute and blind at the same time, astonished, undecided people for whom being and non-being is the same, yet not the same."[47] Also, Herodotus (*Histories* IV, 93–94) speaks of him as someone who learned metempsychosis in Egypt.[48] Isocrates (*Busiris*, 11, 18) mentions Pythagoras' voyages to Egypt. Empedocles seems to allude to him (*Diels*, B, 129 d) when he mentions a "brain of extraordinary knowledge" who professed metempsychosis; perhaps Xenophanes mentions him as well (*Diels*, B, 87).

To conclude, we have the testimony of authors who lived in the fifth and sixth centuries B.C., who make of Pythagoras not only a true historical personage, but likewise a scientist (Heraclitus), a religious man (Herodotus, Empedocles, Isocrates) and a philosopher (Parmenides). Based on these sources, we may arrive in all probability at the following outline of his life.

Born in Samus (Miletus' rival city) around 570 B.C., he studied from 558–554, coming in contact with the philosophy of Anaximenes (Diogenes Laërtius has a letter to him from Pythagoras). In 554–533 he travelled to Egypt (and to Babylonia and Persia, according to Hippolytus) and then returned to Samus, where the tyrant Polycrates (who reigned from 535–515) made life impossible for him. Hence he decided to move to Italy, both to be free and to remove himself from Persian domination, which at the time stretched throughout Ionia. He arrived in Italy in 530 and chose as a residence not Sibari (which was corrupt), not Locri (because of its spartan and non-liberal way of life), but Kroton. Here he established a "thyasus", or corporation, which practised an ascetical religious life: obedience to the leader ("autòs épha"), abstinence from beans and impure meats and purity of life. Pythagoras, who only had limited powers on his arrival in Kroton, managed to organise the city in an oligarchic political style. This upset the population, and Pythagoras was forced to escape around 504, travelling to some nearby towns (Locri? Tarentum?). He settled in Metapontus, where he died in 490 B.C. (or was it 503?).[49] After Pythagoras' death, his disciples regained power in Kroton, which they maintained until 470–460, when the aristocratic Pythagorean government was overthrown by democratically oriented forces. This led to the dispersion of the Pythagoreans throughout southern Italy and Sicily. Some of the disciples' exodus to Greece dates back to 400, when elder Dionysius of Syracuse made their life difficult with his imperial politics. It seems that in his Athenian comedy of 392, *Ecclesiazusae*, Aristophanes refers to Pythagorean doctrines popular at the time in Greece.[50]

3. *Pythagoras' Philosophy*

It was correctly written by V. Capparelli that Pythagoras' philosophy is a "wisdom" (*La sapienza di Pitagora*, 2 volumes, Padua 1941–1944), or a teaching impregnated with a profound religious spirit. This is indicated not only by his voyages to Chaldea and Egypt, but also by his evident dependence on Anaximenes' teaching: the universe is a sacred sphere, with a divine eternal fire, or "pneuma", palpitating at the center and animating all things with a cosmic breath.[51] His vision of man has the same trait; man is an unstable being made up of a mortal breath ("psyché"), but gifted with a divine principle ("dàimon") which transmigrates from body to body, according to the actions of a justice of retribution. However, in addition to this cosmology and anthropology, to him is also attributed a "philosophy" of the number, according to which all things would be made up of entities or principles called "numbers". Is all this true? A possibly satisfactory conclusion would be to assume Anaximenes' *terminus a quo* and Philolaus' *terminus ad quem*. From the former, Pythagoras learned and modified the hypothesis of cosmic breath. The latter author proposed a very elaborate theory of the number. In this fragment we read his obscure words on the subject.

> "The essence and works of the number must be judged in relation to the power inherent to the decade. Indeed, great is the power (of the number), and it does and performs everything, as principle and guide of divine and celestial life and human life, insofar as it participates in the power of the decade. Without this, all would be indeterminate, uncertain and obscure," (*Diels*, B, 11).

Therefore, while admitting a certain progress in Ionian cosmology, Pythagoras introduced the concept of the number as the reason for an ordered and intelligible "cosmos". To this, he added a certain dualistic anthropology and a highly ethical vision of man. This would suffice to give us an approximate doctrine summarising the founder's original teaching. The rest belongs to the school's later development, which may be divided into two branches; the first bound to Philolaus' teaching; the second belonging to Eurytus, Ecphantus, Hippias, Archytas, etc.

4. *The Development of Pythagorean Metaphysics and Science*

Taking as our original models Pythagoras' cosmology, anthropology and ethics, we may comparatively indicate the two (whether it be successive or contemporary) branches of his school in the following fashion:

PYTHAGORAS	PHILOLAUS	PYTHAGOREAN SCIENTISTS
Ionic cosmology of the central fire (cosmic egg?)	Metaphysics of the number, the "Unum et multa"	Physics, astronomy, mechanics, arithmetics, geometry
Dualistic anthropology of Orphic origin: soul or spirit	Philosophical Anthropology: harmony	Medicine: the seat of the soul is the brain Isonomy of the humours
Ascetic ethics: silence, abstinence, contemplation	Politics, law and ethics based on music	Education and military strategy

Let us explain the scheme, beginning the analysis at the first level: Pythagorean cosmology, metaphysics of the number, and science.

Pythagoras had surpassed the concept of "cosmos" (already taught by Anaximander) with the concept of "number": the world is not only order, but a relation of intelligible and multiple proportions, or numbers. This was written well by Philolaus when he taught that nature contains neither falsehood nor irrationality. "Everything that is known has a number; without this, nothing could be thought or known . . . Never does falsehood approach the number, because the number's nature is hostile to falsehood, while truth is proper and natural to the species of number" (*Diels*, B, 11). From Hesiod's Chaos, Anaximenes had reached the "cosmos". Pythagoras went further, hence establishing the principle of transparency of reality through the number. But what is the number? The most plausible response arises from the evolution of the myth of the cosmic egg and the central fire, taken in a metaphysical perspective. The central fire (which the neo-Pythagoreans identified with Zeus, or with the Mother of the Gods, Olympus, Castle of Zeus, etc.), losing its imaginary cover, allows itself to be understood as the supreme Unity whence everything derives. Knowledge of this Unity and its relations with the many is a lofty science. Philolaus states: "It seems that the 'sophia' is much different from all other disciplines, and even from geometry, insofar as its demonstrations are more evident." (*Diels*, B, 4). Philolaus' "sophia" seems to be understood as metaphysics, or the superior knowledge of the world in light of the number. From this principle nature ("physis" detaches itself as the totality of lower beings ("ònta", "prágmata", "tò állo"), which exist insofar as they breathe the vital air or cosmic flux ("rheusfe").

This relation is expressed by Philolaus in the theory of even and odd numbers. He states: "The number has two peculiar species, the odd and the even: the third resulting from these two is the even-odd" (*Diels*, B, 5). That is, the primordial Unity is neither even nor odd (the Greeks ignored the zero), but even-odd, unlimited and infinite. It combines with itself and forms things, while things are composed of the unlimited (or even-odd) and the limited (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 987 a 26–27). Hence things (as Aristotle states when referring to these doctrines) are similarity, imitation, participation, modification, and figures of the number. In what sense this is true is difficult to determine, given that gnoseological order is not distinguished from the ontological one.[52] However, we may state that the essential metaphysics of the number contains three passages: a) the One is the efficient cause; b) nature or "physis" (which consists of evens and odds) is the material and formal cause of the universe; c) the perfection ("téleion") of the universe, or its final cause, is found in the periphery in a cosmographic and eschatological sense.

From this, metaphysics[53] slowly developed the science of numbers: in the magical (arithmological) sense of Petronius of Imera, who found 183 worlds in the triangle, with 60 + 1 distinct ones in each angle; and, in the scientific sense and as a real element. Although scholars generally agree in attributing the development of the sciences to Pythagoras' cosmology and Philolaus' metaphysics, nevertheless they disagree on the matter of primacy: is it arithmetic (B. Russell), mathematics, (Aristotle), music (Giovanni Reale, Zeller) or physics (Guthrie)?[54] For example, G. Reale affirms that the ascetical character of the Pythagoreans required purification of the heart and sentiments, which came from music; hence arises the requirement (as Hippias of Metapontus and later Archytas of Tarentum stated) to construct bronze disks with the various tones or a lyre with the relations:

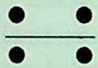
$$1 \text{ (base note)}, \frac{1}{2} \text{ (octave) } \frac{2}{3} \text{ (fifth) } \frac{4}{3} \text{ (fourth)}.^{55}$$

It will always be difficult to resolve this problem. Still, one thing is certain: the Pythagoreans did not properly profess the Orphic religion (which expresses itself at its cult apex in the orgy), but an Apollinear religiosity where the highest ideal was the "theoria", or the passion for contemplation and research. The "mos pythagoricus" or "bios theoretikós" as a life religiously dedicated to knowledge is a great novelty for ancient culture and found imitators in Empedocles, Heraclitus, Plato, etc.

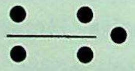
In our opinion, the starting point, beginning with the sense, could only have been physics, since the number is a reality (and not a cipher). Hence Eurytus, a disciple of Philolaus (Aristotle, Metaphysics, 1092 b 8) taught that the numbers were real in the guise of pebbles. Later it was stated that with 250 pebbles (some red, some white, some black) man could be constructed with order ("harmonia") in space. This was also done, more or less by Ecphantus of Syracuse (*Diels*, B, 3).

Also along the lines of physics, the theory of the central fire led the Pythagoreans to formulate an astronomical hypothesis of incalculable developments. Around the central fire rotate the nine celestial bodies; the sun would be the mirror of the central fire; a spherical earth would have to be considered a second planet closest to the fire, after the anti-earth. It was Icetas, and in the second century B.C. Aristarch of Samosata, who stated that at the centre of the universe rested the sun and not the mythical central fire (this bore a Philolaic character). For this reason, Copernicus (*De revolutionibus orbium coelestium*) mentioned Philolaus as the precursor of his theory. However, even before Philolaus came Aristarch (280 B.C.), and hence the Pythagoreans are the true formulators of the heliocentric theory.[56]

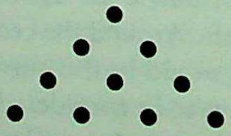
However, the Pythagorean sciences also moved in other directions, based on physics: first of all, in the direction of arithmetic, where the numbers were distinguished into evens and odds, stating that the even is finite, while the odd is indefinite or not finite. The most credible explanation is the following: if the number is represented with pebbles, then it is equal to points. Therefore, for example, "four" has this figure:



It is defined, because it is not open to the odds. On the contrary, the number "five" has this figure:



Here the point on the extreme right indicates a movement to the infinite. Obviously, this arithmetic contains a geometric spirit. Indeed, if the movement of the numbers begins from the point, then it is duplicated in the line, tripled in the triangle, quadrupled in the square, multiplied by eight in the cube, etc. The most perfect figure for the Pythagoreans was called the "tetraktys" which is a triangle formed by points in progression (or flux) from one to four per line:



This was considered a sign of divinity;[57] another geometric, arithmetic symbol was the gnomon, which was represented

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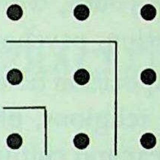
as follows:



5. *Development of Anthropology in Medicine and the Human Sciences*

Just as cosmology was developed in the framework of metaphysics and the sciences of nature, so anthropology gradually branched out to include a more accurate description of man.

The Pythagorean man was interpreted in the light of modified Orphic doctrines. Man consists of soul and body; but while the body is mortal, the soul has only a provisional resting place, since it is immortal. The Pythagoreans seemed to admit that the fall of the immortal soul into the body was due to an original guilt; hence man's terrestrial life takes on a pessimistically provisional character. However, purification does not take place (as the Orphics taught) through magical orgies or "mysteries", but through science. But science (according to the sources we have) was obtained in silence, by listening.

Pythagoras' metempsychosis remains controversial;[58] still, the Pythagoreans maintain that the soul is immortal and that it consists of a "harmony".

Alcmeon of Kroton, a disciple of Pythagoras, vigorously studied medicine, both by introducing (it seems) the vivisection of bodies for physiological and anatomical study and by studying vital phenomena through observation. It was he who said that the brain is the centre or seat of human activities, when he succeeded in discovering the connection of the nervous system with the brain through "canals" or innervation. He studied sensory phenomena and taught that man's normal life consists of an isonomy, or an equilibrium of contraries: cold-hot, dry-wet.[59]

However, the Pythagoreans, following their master's example in holding discourses with youth, women, politicians, etc., also studied questions of education, psychology, politics, etc.

We may conclude this exposition on the Pythagorean school by mentioning again its high religious, philosophical and scientific tension and its capacity to expand culturally in various directions. This is confirmed by Pythagorean effects in *political areas* as far away as Rome (it seems that Numa Pompilius was an initiate) and Greece (Epaminondas had been educated in the "mos pythagoricus").[60] *Scientifically*, it seems certain that Hippocrates' medicine was influenced by Pythagorean ideals;[61] surely this was true of Empedocles' theory about eye structure. Theophrastus states: "The internal part of the eye is fire; and the external part is water, earth and air, through which the fire can pass because of its fineness, as does the lantern-flame" (*Diels*, A, 31).

The *philosophical* seed planted by Pythagoreanism for the further development of metaphysics was no less significant. In addition to Empedocles, whose theory of the four elements echoes Pythagorean ideas of numerical geometry, there were three decisive currents of thought: the Eleatic reaction, which rejected arithmology as a stale concept incapable of explaining existence and returned to the value of being; the progress of the Atomist school, for which the number from the pebble was transformed into an authentic atom; and, finally, Plato, who transfigured the number into absolute and paradigmatic ideas. It is not without reason that various sources describe one significant episode: Plato giving his friend Dion, prince of Syracuse, the task of purchasing three of Philolaus' Pythagorean books for eighty talents (Diogenes Laërtius, III, 9).

CHAPTER THREE

HERACLITUS

1. *Introduction*

Heraclitus' life[62] included the following significant dates for Ionia: 546, fall and subjugation of the Lydian kingdom at the hands of the Persians; 498, revolt of the Ionians against Persian domination, followed by the burning of Sardi, the satrap's seat; 494, repression of Darius and destruction of Miletus; 490–469, the Greco-Persian wars, which culminated with Ionia's liberation.

The date of Heraclitus' birth or death is unknown, but we know that he reached the peak of his fame around 505–500, during the period of Ionian anti-Persian activity. His homeland, Ephesus, was involved in the political turbulence, provoking the philosopher's anger and causing him to accuse political leaders of abdicating leadership to the masses.[63] His attacks were also directed at earlier poets and thinkers, such as Hesiod, Homer, Pythagoras and Xenophanes. His pride can be seen in his frequent use of the pronoun "I" in his writings[64] and in his open declaration of independence from any teacher. However, it would be an exaggeration to negate the presence of earlier doctrines in his thought (for example, Anaximander's philosophy).

This aristocratic thought was accompanied by a pessimism; hence, his entire philosophical conception is dominated by a profound sense of reality's ephemeral fragility. For this reason he was also called the "crying philosopher"; in this way he detached himself from the rest of Ionian philosophy and established himself as a solitary figure of ancient thought.[65]

2. *Writings of Heraclitus*

Many sources tell us that Heraclitus wrote a volume entitled (as in the case of other early thinkers) *On Nature*, which was divided into three parts: cosmology, politics (anthropology) and theology.

The date of this composition is uncertain; the fragments we possess indicate the years 490–480 or slightly later. His style is difficult and intentionally obscure (hence the name "obscure" attributed to Heraclitus). The aphoristic style of the fragments[66] reinforce his desire to make himself incomprehensible to the vulgar masses, so that "he would be approached only by those able to understand him. . . so that he would be scorned".[67] Therefore, he placed his work on the altar of the goddess Arthemides, protectress of the city, so that it would not become the subject of profane reading.[68]

He had commentators, readers and admirers throughout antiquity. Socrates (Diogenes Laërtius, IX, 11, 2) supposedly stated: "What you included was excellent, but I believe that what you did not include was also excellent." Aristotle (*Rhetoric* 1047 b 12) complained about the lack of punctuation in his works. Cleanthes, a Stoic of the third century B.C., purportedly wrote an exegesis of Heraclitus in four volumes (Diogenes Laërtius, VII, 174); as likewise a certain Sphairus, a Stoic of the same century, commented on Heraclitus in a five-volume work entitled *Diatribae*. The interest shown by the Stoics derives from their intention to discover in Heraclitus a precursor of the universe's cyclical conflagration. In the first century A.D., Philo the Hebrew was inspired by Heraclitus in reaching his doctrine on the "Logos". Lucretius states in *De rerum natura* that he is "clarus ob obscuram linguam" (I, 639). The first Christian teachers also respected Heraclitus, so much so that St. Justin the Martyr lists him along with Socrates and Abraham as having lived according to the

Logos. From Hippolytus of Rome (*Refutationes*, IX) we discover that in the second century A.D., there existed in Rome (and elsewhere) the heresy of the Paterpassians ("Pater passus est non Filius"), who supported their errors even by referring to Heraclitus, whom they quoted often in support of the Incarnation and Passion of the Father.

Clement of Alexandria mentions him as the precursor of the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body (fr. B 63).[69]

These references to Heraclitus in ancient times by various cultures and philosophies also leads to a variety of interpretations.

3. *Interpretations of Heraclitus*

The obscurity of Heraclitus' texts was in ancient times interpreted by Plato and Aristotle as a doctrinal indication favourable to a general becoming of all things. The phrase "pánta rhêi, oudèn ménei" (*Cratylus* 440, b; but also *Theaetetus* 189 a) was considered by many as the standard for cosmic flux, contrary to the doctrine of ideas, and as a polemical point of Heraclitus against Parmenides. This opinion was also stated recently by E. Zeller. However, today this thesis is not in vogue,[70] even if some believe that it was Diels' prejudice that excluded Plato's phrase from his listing of authentic fragments.[71] In reality, it seems that the phrase should be attributed to Heraclitus' successors, especially to his follower (but not disciple) Cratylus.

Modern scholars express a wide variety of interpretations. One of the most popular is the materialistic one (Zeller, Burnet, Gomperz, Cardini, De Ruggiero, Kirck, Maddalena, Frenkian, etc.), according to which Heraclitus' philosophy does not detach itself from Ionian naturalists. To the contrary, it could be observed that Heraclitus did not seek a system, but a synthesis. The system is centrifugal; the synthesis is centripetal. Heraclitus penetrates phenomena only to return to the super-cosmic unity through an inquiry not scientific, but existential. The objective description of phenomena (or "historìa") is similar to that of scientists and tends to come together in the unity which is knowledge of the "noûs" (fragment B 40) that is, in the "sophrosyne", or sageness of life (fragment B 116), which is in almost instinctive (more than reasoned) form of wisdom. Hence the solidarity of the world and the "ego" through the "logos". Without a doubt, philosophers must possess a certain knowledge of the physical world (fragment B 35), but this cannot be identified with scientific research, an end unto itself, as Pythagoras did with his "erudition" or "polymathia".[72]

Another famous interpretation is that of G. F. Hegel, according to whom Heraclitus foresaw the discovery of dialectics as the principle of becoming. S. Arcoleo ("Filosofia del linguaggio in Eraclito, Analisi critica del frammento 1 di Narcovich", in *Sapienza*, XXVII, 1974, pp. 191–202) states that Hegel's interpretation is at least more suggestive than that of M. Heidegger.

There are also interpretations of correlation or derivation. For example, F. M. Cleve (*The Giants of the Pre-Sophistic Great Philosophers*, The Hague 1965, volume I, p. 36) states that Heraclitus was inspired by Zoroastrianism religion.[73] Instead, Professor Ada Somigliano supports the correlation or relation of Heraclitus' thought with the Indian doctrine of the Upanishad; she even finds similarities between the death of Heraclitus and the ritual deaths of the brahmins (*Influenze vediche nel pensiero Eracliteo*, Milan 1953, pp. 30 ff.)[74] (cfr. Diogenes Laërtius, VII, 1, 3).

Our interpretation is inspired by the works of Carlo Mazzantini (*Eraclito*, Turin 1944), Luigi Bogliolo (*La storia della filosofia antica*, Turin 1955) and the above-mentioned M. De Corte, according to whom Heraclitus proposed a philosophy of gradual development which, working from an external set of three great concentric circles (world, man, spirit or logos), penetrates through intensification to all reality's foundation, the logos. This opinion is also shared by W. Jäger (*Paideia*, translated into Italian, vol. I, p. 246).

4. *From Nature to Man*

The "historia" of natural phenomena, or Heraclitus' cosmology or physical system, "is probably only one of our a *posteriori* constructions".[75] Diogenes Laërtius' comments on this subject are scarce and rudimental. This means that Heraclitus was not interested in a mathematical and scientific vision of the world. Therefore, it is merely modern usage to insist on presumed scientific aspects (Gomperz) or to state that Heraclitus was a materialistic pantheist (Frenkian). Heraclitus' "affirmations on nature" (Diodorus) regard an aspect of that "historia", which also extends to political and social phenomena. This is also visible in the threefold style of the cosmological fragments: descriptive, explanatory and philosophical.

The *descriptive fragments* present the physical world as it appears to the senses, with vague allusions or symbolic phrases: "If there were no sun, it would be night" (fragment B 99); "The limits of the aurora and of the evening are the Bear and, at the opposite of the Bear, the terminus of the shining Zeus" (fragment B 120); "The hours bring everything" (fragment B 100); "The sun is new every day" (fragment B 6); "The sun is the size of the human foot" (fragment B 3); "Each day is equal to every other day" (fragment B 106).

The *explanatory fragments* indicate a philosophical-speculative design and are beyond simple description. They are a listing of the laws of contraries regulating change: "The ocean is the purest and most impure water, drinkable and healthy to fish, undrinkable and fatal to men" (fragment B 61); "Illness makes health, hunger, surfeit, fatigue and repose sweet and welcome" (fragment B 111); "What is cold heats up, what is hot cools, the wet dries and the dry becomes wet" (fragment B 126).

The *philosophical fragments* go beyond the contraries; and here Heraclitus indicates the root or principle, which is the logos, with the symbolism of fire.[76] In fact, we read: "Reciprocal exchange of all things with fire and of fire with all things, like products and gold, and gold and products" (fragment B 90); "This order of the world is not the same for all, but it has always been and is, and will be a living fire for eternity, which at the due time lights and at the due time goes out" (fragment B 30); "The lightning governs all things" (fragment B 64); "Changes of the fire: first ocean, of the ocean, one half earth; the other half fiery breath" (fragment B 31); "The coming fire will judge all things" (fragment B 66).

There are also the famous "river" fragments: "We enter into the same river twice, yet we do not enter, we are and we are not" (fragment B 49); "One cannot enter twice into the same river, according to Heraclitus, nor can one twice touch the same mortal substance in the same state..." (fragment B 91). Again, when referring to the world: "The age of a child who plays while moving playing pieces here and there: kingdom of the child" (fragment B 52); referring to the heaven: "It is not like a sack of garbage thrown about by chance, but the most beautiful order ("kallíste harmonia") (fragment B 124).

Obviously, from these fragments we cannot arrive at a cosmological system; what we find is a search for unity going beyond the contrary nature of physical reality.

5. *From Anthropology to the Logos*

Just as is the case with physical reality, so likewise human reality reveals a requirement for unity in a greater intensity and interiority. This revelation first becomes clear on the political level. Social life is regulated by the norm ("nómos"), which is such that the community of men is like a harmony of contraries. The "nómos" is a form of "logos", of justice ("dike"), which rests behind the phenomena of human cohabitation.[77]

However, the approach to man is easier when one enters into man's intimate side, because "a man's character is his destiny" (fragment B 119).[78] In this perspective, one can state (along with Mazzantini) that Heraclitus is the first to introduce humanism to Western culture. However, he is pessimistic, without hope. Indeed, man is a frail being in his physical body: "The cadavers are to be thrown out more than the excrement" (fragment B 96); even a living man is ugly: "The most beautiful ape is horrible, compara-

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ble to the human race" (fragment B 82). However, "The wisest of men will seem an ape compared to the god, in wisdom, beauty and every quality" (fragment B 83).

Man's condition is even worse if one looks at man internally, since the majority of men live like animals ("Sues cœno, cohortales aves pulvere vel cinere lavari" (fragment B 37). The masses satiate themselves with bestial greed (fragments B 4 and 29). Man seems present to himself; but he is drunk (fragment B 34) because, in entrusting himself to his senses, he lives as if he were epileptic (fragment B 46). Indeed, eyes and ears are false witnesses (fragment B 107). There are thousands of these men for one sage (fragment B 104); "The many are not worth anything, only the few are valuable" (fragment B 104).

It is difficult to escape intoxication with false personal persuasions, which Heraclitus calls "phrónesis idìa" (fragment B 2). Still, it is necessary to escape from the suffocating circle of this stupidity. Therefore, one must follow what is common. However, although this reality is common ("toû logou de eóntos xynoû" – *ibid.*), many remain prisoners of error, beginning with those who follow that leader of impostors, Pythagoras (fragment B 81) and with those inspired by Homer and Archilocus, poets who deserved to be flogged (fragment B 42). Neither Pythagorean erudition nor the vain mythology of poets reveals truth to us.

In an exceptional fragment, Heraclitus declares: "Man lights for himself a light in the night, while his eyes are shut: alive, he touches the dead with what is turned off; awake, he touches the sleeping" (fragment B 26). Hence access to truth presupposes the renunciation of ephemeral sensory knowledge, with the "night" being the goal, so that a "light" may be lit. With this light, man is "awake" without allowing himself to be "touched by the dead" or by false exterior illusions. Thus, we arrive at the highest point of Heraclitus' anthropology, an itinerary from the external to the internal and from the internal to the celestial. We read in one celebrated fragment: "No matter how much you travel, and even though you travel every road, you will never reach the boundaries of the soul ("psychês péras"), so profound is the logos it possesses" (fragment B 45). The soul which descends into the depths of man's being is outside the "sad circle of evil" and frees itself from the "wet way" of the cosmic cycle and rises as a "scintilla stellaris" (fragment A 15) to the logos.

6. *The Religiosity of the Logos*

The progress of Heraclitus' philosophy finds its vertex in the logos; however, this statement needs clarification. On one hand, this Ephesian philosopher rejects a form of exoteric religion. In fact, he accuses the bacchants, those initiated into Orphic rites, of impiety (fragments B 14 and 15). There are two forms of rite: those cathartic and pure, which remedy metempsychosis, and the coarse, immoral rites (fragments B 68 and 69).[79]

Therefore, it seems that above the immoral rites an approach to the divine exists. However, for Heraclitus the divine is divided into ascending forms: from the heroes to the gods (fragment B 5); from men gloriously fallen in battle (fragment B 24) to the prophetess who "has visions beyond the millennia, because she has been invaded by the god" (fragment B 92); from Homer's anthropomorphic gods (who "did not teach the whole truth about the gods and the world" – fragment B 56) one can discover Zeus (fragments B 32 and 41), not according to mythological recountings, but as the "only wisdom" ("hen tò sophòn moûnon") which wishes and does not wish to be called by the name Zeus (fragment B 32).[80]

Heraclitus' religious progress seems to be clarified in fragment 35, where he offers the definition of a philosopher as "he who is expert in many things". He must work from immediate concrete data to elevate himself to a unity where empirical experience is appeased in the principle. "This is the only wisdom: to understand how totality is governed through totality." (fragment B 41). This phenomenology leads to the discovery of oneself: "I inquired about myself". Therefore, Heraclitus is a "prophet of a truth of which he has managed to have an intellectual intuition",[81] of a sapiential character. The prevalence of the words "phronesis" and "phroneîn" (and not "noeîn" and "noûs") indicates that Heraclitus' philosophy is not speculative, but religious and moral. Its goal is victory against the "hybris".

7. *The Logos and its Dimensions*

For the study of Heraclitus' logos, we could begin from an analysis of his language. This was done by A. Pagliaru (*Eraclito e il Logos. Saggio di critica semantica*, Messina, Florence 1953, pp. 153 ff.). According to Pagliaru, the logos does not indicate a logical unity, but "words" and "works" ("épea" and "érga"). In this fashion, the above-mentioned A. Bonetti finds in the word "logos" used in the fragments the meaning of "fame" (cfr. B 39), "word" (fragments B 87 and 108), "measure and proportion" (fragments B 31, 45 and 115). However, it is important that this same author states that in fragments 1, 2, 50 and 72 the word "logos" takes on a decisive philosophical meaning, which is what interests us here.

The philosophical character of the logos consists of its value in unifying the universe. The discovery of contraries and the unity of their opposites was noted in antiquity and provoked the admiration (for example) of Philo, who observed in the first century after Christ. "Is this not what Heraclitus, considered so great and glorious by the Greeks, was proud to have found by himself, having placed a foundation for philosophy?" (*Quest. rer. div. h.* 43.214).

Still, how does the logos unify contraries? Recently, this question has received a variety of responses and formulations. The unity of opposites is affirmed as tension (W. Jäger, G. S. Kirk, Abbagnano), connection or contiguity (M. Gentile, Pasquinelli), as harmony (Paci, Guthrie), equilibrium (Maddalena), or as the "coexistence of contraries" (Gomperz).[82] The variety of formulas also indicates the disparity of interpretations, which can be fundamentally divided into two groups: the logos is not outside the contraries, but is their immanent law; hence the thesis of *absolute becoming* (for example, M. Timpanaro Cardini).[83] Guthrie declares that in Heraclitus the harmony of contraries contains three affirmations: a) everything is *made up of contraries*; b) the *contraries are identical*; c) *war is their creative force* and constituent director. This opinion is repeated by many other authors, albeit with various accents.

There is also a second interpretation, which we share. This interpretation is called the *relational* theory; according to it, there does exist a discord in phenomena. We read in fragment B 51 that the harmony of things possesses many tensions ("palíntropos harmoníe"). This is repeated elsewhere: "The opposite in agreement is a most beautiful harmony" (fragment B 8) of "co-joining" (fragment B 10 – "synàpsis"). However, the thirty pairs of contraries which Gigon minutely gathered from the philosopher's texts (night-day, cold-hot, light-darkness, wet-dry, etc.) are sometimes relative but non-opposed terms when mentioned as qualities of bodies (hot-cold). Sometimes they are an accidental relation (wet-dry), sometimes substantial ("death-life"), sometimes a pure relation of two distinct terms (water-air, water-earth), etc.

The variety of relations leads us to the statement that things are not intrinsically made up of contraries, as Guthrie states. Fragment B 60 ("The same way goes up and down") does not indicate an identity of the terms but a possibility that the traveller be the same. This is also the case for day-night, known-unknown, straight-bent, which are not real in the same object, but in opposites. Therefore, they are not identical.

Second, even where the terms are opposed. Heraclitus indicates the way to unity.[84] Heraclitus states: "Polemos is the father of all and the king of all; some he reveals to be gods, some as men" (fragment B 53). This almost seems to say that the single cause generates different effects, although it remains distinct from both effects. This is why Heraclitus states in another place: "[the fire], when it mixes with odorous fumes, takes on the name of each of the odors" (fragment B 67).[85]

Third, the logos is the efficient cause, and hence the principle, of the unity of contraries. Indeed, using the gnoseological procedure, the contrasts between things lead us to recognising them as "díke" (fragment B 23), or ontological justice. In itself, the logos is not only the principle of governance ("kybernân"), but also the exemplary cause ("genoménon gàr pánton *katà lògon tònde*" (fragment B 1).[86] However, this is an exemplarity accessible only to thought; it is an "invisible harmony" (fragment B 67), a "wisdom *separated* from cosmic reality" ("tò sophòn estin kechorisménon pánton" – fragment B 108).

Therefore, this wisdom is known to few; hidden behind nature ("physis" – fragment B 123) there is a wisdom which works in the world "like a child's game" (fragment B 70), so difficult is it to comprehend. It may be a model for human thought, but from this it is distinct. In fact, men seek to create words ("épea") for it, and men announce its existence ("phrázon"). However, they still do not know it (fragment B 1). It is like a secret beauty which takes on the name of each thing (fragment B 67) without being imprisoned by things. Its name is existent truth ("toû dè lògou toûd'eóntos aeí" – fragment B 1).

Heraclitus' logos is hence a threefold unity: linguistic, gnoseological and ontological. It expresses itself, it thinks itself, it is. Still, it would be improper to see in it a trinity made up of god, fire and logos.[87] The "o theòs" of Heraclitus is still the "tò theïon" of the Ionians, unless it refers to Dionysius or to Jupiter. Therefore, this is an impersonal and subsistent wisdom which cannot be confused with Saint John's logos, as the following comparative diagram illustrates.

HERACLITUS	SAINT JOHN
The logos manifests itself to man	True light which illuminates every man who comes into this world

Things become according to this logos	Through the logos all things have been created
The logos is law, justice, fate	The logos is God, Word of the Father
Men do not understand the logos, since each person has a personal opinion	And the world did not know him
NEBULOUS PANTHEISM of the impersonal logos	CREATION AND TRANSCENDENCE of the logos, which is the second Person of the Trinity

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ELEATIC SCHOOL

1. *Introduction*

The Persian conquest of Anatolia or Ionia led many to seek freedom to the west. This was done by Pythagoras, and also by Xenophanes of Colophon, a small centre in Caria a few kilometres north from Ephesus. This was also done by the majority of Phocesians, inhabitants of a city even further north from Colophon, in 535. After having founded Alasia in Corsica and Marseilles, they decided to travel south to Italy and settled in the city of Velia (Elea in Greek), a city perhaps of Etruscan origin located between Poestum and Palinurus. Parmenides and his follower Zeno were born there after the city expanded and became richer, although the dates are uncertain.[88]

The Greek tradition was preserved until the second century A.D., when the flowering culture decayed and the city was reduced to the status of a simple Roman municipality, full of villas for rich Romans. In the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. the city was abandoned because of malaria and the danger of pirates. Only today have archaeological studies revealed to us its stupendous monuments, which are among the most important of Mediterranean antiquity.

This explains why Xenophanes, when escaping Ionia in search of freedom, passed through Elea and was influenced by the city. But here the question arises whether the three authors, whom we shall examine, truly make up a philosophical school. V. Guazzoni Foà ("Senophane e Parmenide in Platone", in *Giornale di Metafisica*, XVI, 1961, p. 468) calls it a school, based on the word "éthnos" of Plato (which literally means "tribe"). Still, in what sense did Xenophanes, Parmenides and Zeno make up a school? Aristotle states:

> "Xenophanes, who still before him (Melissus) affirmed the unity of all (in fact, it is said that Parmenides was his disciple), offers no clarification, and it does not seem that he arrived at the nature of one or the other of these causes; but, extending his consideration to the whole universe, he states that the one is God" (*Metaphysics* I., 986 b 20).

Properly speaking, there were only two (of those whom we shall consider) who were natives of Elea—Parmenides and Zeno. Xenophanes was often added to the school, while in reality it seems he must be considered an autonomous author. Nevertheless, he is considered the "theologian" of the school, based on the philosophical character of his work, which attacks polytheism and contemporary idolatry while affirming unity. Plutarch states:

> "Xenophanes of Colophon, following his method, detached himself from the ideas of all the above philosophers [Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes] and admitted neither birth, nor corruption, stating instead that the totality is always the same" (Stromat. 4 in Eusebius P. E. 1.8.4).

Therefore, we state that Xenophanes is an Eleatic in a wide sense. On the contrary, we will also call Eleatic followers those Socratics belonging to the Megarian school (founded by Euclid the Megarians, which progressed later under Stilpo, etc.) and renewed their polemics with the Eleatic Zeno in reference to the doctrine of the one and immutable good. In this sense, the Eleatic school, with its tendency to immobility and unity, existed for about 250 years, from the fifth through the third centuries B.C.

Therefore, strictly speaking, the school includes Parmenides, Zeno and Melissus of Samo, whom we may respectively call the metaphysical, the dialectic, and the physical exponents. Still, note that this school did not imply a stable location where teaching took place. Parmenides and Zeno, although they resided in Elea, travelled to Athens on (it seems) a political mission. Hence their teaching represents more a doctrinal tendency than a fixed location.

This common orientation can be described in three points: a) in the origin of philosophy, b) in the structure of philosophy, c) in the end.

In the origin, the Eleatics believe that philosophy is more a revelation from above than a conquest of thought (cfr. the contrasting "phronesis" of Heraclitus). In fact, Xenophanes states that the gods have not revealed everything to mortals (fragment B 18); and Parmenides, in the prologue of his poem, said that he was instructed by a goddess at the temple of truth.

In the structure, philosophy is a "noeîn", a fundamental intuitive form of thought outside the senses, which reveals to us the unity and immobility of being.

In the end, philosophy is not an acquisition of the "phronesis" or an ethical-religious wisdom (the "ethos" of Heraclitus), nor of a scientific erudition (the "polymathia" of Pythagoras), but an acquisition of an intellectual knowledge, a direct vision of thought, an intellectual "noêin".

2. *Xenophanes*

Born around 570 B.C. in Colophon, in 546 he left his land, which was occupied by the Persians through the median Arpagus. He visited various cities of the Hellas, then migrated to Sicily while visiting Messene and Catania. He died in his dotage around 470 at the court of Jeron, tyrant of Syracuse. He purportedly wrote a work entitled *De natura* and numerous *Elegies* and *Satires*, which were performed in the courts.

The 38 fragments gathered by Diels, which contain 188 verses, and various testimonials, have been interpreted in various ways.

These can be divided into three basic interpretations: a) Xenophanes was not a true philosopher, but a rhapsodist, a ragamuffin who earned a living as a minstrel, performing Homer and composing verses (Gomperz and C. Corbato);[89] b) Xenophanes was a disciple of Parmenides. In fact, he passed through Elea where, despite being older, he learned Eleatic doctrines from his younger teacher. Therefore, Xenophanes was a rhapsodist, but he was also an eclectic capable of spicing his satirical verses with Eleatic doctrines. The anonymous essay *De Xenophane Melisso et Gorgia* would represent a compendium of ideas coming from Parmenides but correctly attributed to Xenophanes as well (K. Reinhardt).[90]

c) The third position, to which we subscribe, states that, more than a rhapsodist or a disciple of Parmenides, he was a solitary thinker, a poet-theologian who possessed, together with the Eleatics, a certain diffidence for sensory knowledge and a tendency to the unity of beings. We do not state that he was the "theologian of the Eleatics" (as Jäger states, this would be an illusion), but their precursor. Indeed, Plato states: ". . . instead, our Eleatic sect, which began from Xenophanes *and even earlier*, states that what is called the universe is one" (*Sophistes* 242 c–d).

His writings were already lost in Cicero's times, but some extracts were used by Aristotle, who wrote a polemic booklet entitled *Contra Xenophanem* (Diogenes Laërtius VII, 4).

Theophrastus referred to him, as did the poet Timaeus (320–230 B.C.) when the latter imitated the *Satires*. Even Varro seems to refer to him when he divides theological discussions into mythological (of Homer, Hesiod, etc.), political (sanctioned by State laws) and "natural", which is the object of human thought in general. Saint Augustine reconsiders Xenophanes thinking and makes it a centuries-long philosophical tradition. Note the fact that Leibniz called the "natural theology" of Varro "theodicy". However, Clement of Alexandria had already referred to Xenophanes when defending the principle that God's unity is accessible to human reason.

Xenophanes' philosophy possesses some Ionian aspects in its examination of the physical world,[91] but this is only an auxiliary aspect of his studies. The Ionian "arché" is transformed into theology, introducing into the theological vocabulary the adjective "theoprepés" ("convenient to God") as the primary point of a new doctrine. It is true that he, still bound to a certain ingenuous "historía", states that things and man consist of earth and water (fragments B 29 and 33), that the moon is a condensed cloud (Aëtius, II, 25, 4), that lightning is produced by clouds which become inflamed (*ibid.*, III, 3, 6), that "we are all born of earth and water" (fragment B 33). However, his attention is directed at the study of divinity on two levels: *one negative*, against popular beliefs:

> Homer and Hesiod have attributed to the gods all that for men is shameful and reproachful: stealing, committing adultery and deceiving one another (fragment B 11; cfr. 12).

Again, after having rejected divination (A 52) and the conviction that one god could dominate other gods, he follows with this critique:

> Bur mortals imagine that the gods are born and that they have figures and clothes as men do [fragment B 14]. The Ethiopians state that their gods are snub-nosed and black, while the Thracians state that theirs have blue eyes and red hair [fragment B 16].

However, this stupidity condemns itself:

> But if the oxen, the horses and the lions were to have hands and were able to perform works like those of men, then the horse would draw the gods similar to the horse, and the oxen like oxen . . .

Therefore, common opinions do not suffice in the investigation of divinity's nature. The road is not easy:

> The gods have certainly not revealed everything to men from the beginning, but in searching, men better discover little by little . . .

In this way we enter the *positive* part of Xenophanes' theology,[92] made up, above all, of methodological circumspection. Access to the divine begins from the senses, from the "probable" (fragment B 35), "through all things which manifest themselves to the sight of mortals" (fragment B 36).[93] However, we are still in a phase of searching:

> And no man has ever unveiled the exact truth ("tò saphés"), nor will there ever be anyone who truly knows everything about the gods and about the things I say. If someone were to arrive at expressing something at its highest level, not even he would have a true knowledge, since only an apparent knowledge of everything exists (fragment B 34).

It seems that Xenophanes is entrusting himself to an observation of the cosmos as the most certain way to proceed theologically. In Aristotle we read this declaration: "Xenophanes, turning his fixed gaze at the heavens in their totality, said that the one was god" (*Metaphysics*, 986 b 18). However, the problem attacked by Xenophanes does not concern the *existence* of God, but his *essence* and *attributes*. Here are some notable quotes:

> [There is] only one god ["heís theós"], the greatest among men and gods, similar to mortals neither in figure nor in thought ["nóema"] (fragments B 23 and 14).

Also:

> [He] always remains in the same place, immobile, nor does he take to moving here and there (fragment B 26).

And so, the one is immobile, different from reality, supreme:

> Therefore, the one is immobile, different from reality, supreme. . . "Being entire, it sees ["hoûlos horâ"], entire it thinks and entire it hates" (fragment B 24). But without fatigue, with the force of its mind [nooû phreni"], it dominates [kraánei] everything (fragment B 25).[94]

A question often debated today by exegetes as regards the passage reported by Clement of Alexandria, where Xenophanes purportedly stated that "there exists only one God" (*Stromata* V, 109). This would be an affirmation of God's *unity*.

The passage has been studied by Covotti, Guthrie, V. Guazzoni Foà, etc., leaving the alternative: is the unity a subject or a predicate? That is, either a) the One exists, therefore it is God, or b) God exists, therefore he is One.

The first deductive thesis was rejected by V. Guazzoni Foà with good reasons, in contrast to M. Untersteiner[95] and others. Xenophanes is not a monotheist in the modern sense. He only wishes to demonstrate that God is one, even if there exist next to this God other gods "in a purged sense" (fragment B 23). However, I would not agree with G. Reale in the statement that Xenophanes was a pantheist.[96] The "form" of God (fragment B 23) must not be placed in relation to the form of the cosmos.

3. *Parmenides*

3.1 *Introduction*

Two possible dates of birth exist for Parmenides: one proposed by Apollodorus of 540 B.C. (but this seems improbable, given the arrival of exiled Phoocesians in Velia around 530 B.C.), and another given by Plato, who states in three dialogues that the young Socrates heard him in Athens when the master was 65 years old. Therefore, Parmenides was probably born in 510. His teacher was the Pythagorean Aminias,[97] and he also dedicated himself to political life. For this reason (the establishment of alliances) he travelled to Athens. Nothing is known about his death.

His volume *De Natura* was written in poetic exameters, in a Homeric dialect (not Doric, as was the custom in the Italian colonies). For his elevated style and profound doctrine, he enjoyed exceptional popularity in antiquity, so much so that he was read up to the sixth century B.C. Indeed, Simplicius, who lived in that century, quotes 53 of his verses. Today 19 fragments remain of various lengths, totaling 154 verses.

The heroic style of the prologue and the exametric verses reveal the author's intention to rival Hesiod, whose book *The Works and the Days* was then considered an official catechism among Greeks. Just as Hesiod, at the beginning of his theogony, narrates being visited and instructed on the truth of the gods by a muse while he was a shepherd at the foot of the sacred Mount Hellicon; so Parmenides, the newly mythical Phaeton, narrates in his prologue that he was taken on a winged chariot by the Heliads, daughters of the sun. The chariot is guided during the night by wise horses through the cities of mortals and reaches the doors of the celestial temple and the goddess of truth, who reveals divine knowledge to Parmenides.[98]

What sense should we give the prologue? It seems that we must avoid two excesses: either to consider it a deceiving artifice extraneous to the philosophical poem (as Karl Reinhardt stated in his *Parmenides*, Bonn 1916), or, on the contrary to consider it the key to the philosophical resolution (as if the entire exposition could be reduced to a divine revelation). The truth seems to lie between the extremes: Parmenides was neither a rationalist nor a mystic. The prologue is a preliminary affirmation of philosophy's general religious value. On the other hand, the prologue serves only as a framework, an external entry point to a strictly intellectual philosophical argumentation. A prologue without a text would be a pointless poetic artifice; the texts without a prologue would give us a rationalistic philosophy without a religious spirit and rigorous philosophical teaching authority.

3.2 *General Character of Parmenides' Philosophy and its Interpretations*

Parmenides' philosophical poem is not homogeneous. There are fragments with vigorous philosophical reflection, while others indulge in "historìa", or a description of the world and its phenomena. However, the latter are much less interesting than the former. This difference arises from Parmenides' intentions because he considered "truth" ("alétheia") to be a strictly philosophical discourse, while the "dóxa", or opinion, was an exposition of natural phenomena (such as solar dimensions, animal life, becoming, etc.). For now, we defer a consideration of the two Eleatic methods' relation. First of all, we will study the "truth"—the philosophy of being, which is indestructible, perfect and intelligible.

From this point of view, Parmenides is an oveturned Pythagorean.[99] Note that Parmenides' teacher was Aminias, whose doctrine had irritated him. Surely, if (as some Pythagoreans stated) reality consists of geometric points, then everything is reduced to abstract essences, just as the point, the line, the triangle, the circle, the cube, etc., are abstract. Existence must be safeguarded—indeed, the existent ("tò eón"), which is not reduced to logical elements, is not divided into geometric parts, as if a reality could be reduced into cubes, polyhedra, points, and so forth. No, the existent is compact and exists before thought. Before arithmetic and geometry, a philosophy of being or a metaphysics exists on which thought depends, and not vice versa.

So, what is this being, which in the texts is related to the infinitive (to be, in Greek "eînai" or "pelénai"), with the singular participle "being" ("to eón") and the third-person present indicative "is" ("ésti")?

There are basically six interpretations. This large number is not surprising if one considers the intricacy of the verses, the dispersion of the fragments, and the preferences or orientations of historians.

A) *Mystical interpretation* of Plotinus (204–270 A.D.), which understands Parmenides' being to be Xenophanes' Unum, god.

B) *Idealistic interpretation* of Hegel, Stenzel, etc.: Parmenides' existent is a production of thought; to think means to be.

C) *Materialistic interpretation* of Gomperz, Tannery, Guthrie,[100] etc., according to which being is the sum of material bodies, almost like Spinoza's "Substantia".

D) *Logical interpretation* of Reizler, Paci, Calogero, Cappelle, Frankel, Reidel, etc.: Parmenides' being is only the copula of a proposition. No being exists before the predication, and hence before grammar and logic. Grammatically, the verb "is" (the rose "is" white) is the mental function through which the mind, through particular judgements, unifies bodies' properties. The participle "being" ("tò eón") is but a general form indicating the copulative function of individual judgements. The infinitive "to be" ("tò eînai") is the undifferentiated form of all copulative operations.[101]

E) *Platonic-Aristotelian or categoric interpretation*: Parmenides' being is a transcendent concept with various meanings: substance, quality, quantity, place, etc. Hence I say that the dog "is", that the dog-kennel "is", and that the size of the dog "is". Substance, quality, place, quantity, etc., are modes of being. Being is a concept which "is spoken in many ways" (*Physics*, 194 b 15).

F) *Existential or metaphysical interpretation*: Being is the original and primary form of existence in the world. Really, note Parmenides' significant expression "Indeed, being is". This thesis, proposed by M. Heidegger, was later deepened by C. Fabro in *Dall'essere all'esistenza* (Brescia 1957), G. Prini in *Ontologia* (Milano 1957), J. Beaufret in *Le poème de Parmenide* (Paris 1958), etc. This opinion seems to us to be nearest the intent of Eleatic texts, even if Heidegger's position (especially in later years—cfr. *Einführung in den Metaphysik*) is the least acceptable, as likewise the thesis of his disciple Hans Gadamer (*Wahrheit und Methode*). This was pointed out by A. De Wahlens ("Problemes ontologiques de l'Hermenéutique", in *Ermeneutica e Tradizione*, Rome 1963, pp. 43 ff.).

3.3 *Parmenides' Metaphysics Being*

We may now proceed to a deepening of the Eleatic being, beginning with a rejection of the five proposed interpretations. This being is not God, for two reasons: a) it is never called a god in the texts: and, b) being is not defined through its unity, in opposition to multiplicity.[102] *Plotinus' interpretation* does not seem acceptable, in that it would make Parmenides a pure monist. "The problem of the didactic poem is not the "hèn", but the "òn" (Untersteiner, op. cit., p. XXXVII).

The *idealistic* interpretation is not indicative of any Greek attitude, since those philosophers were eminently objectivistic; and, the *materialistic* theory seems attractive, but it is certainly not Ionic, since being is not the "arché". There is no principality for Parmenides, and hence being cannot be a principle.

The logical interpretation of Calogero ("Parmenide e la genesi della logica classica", in *Annali della R. Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, Pisa 1936, p. 3) cannot be supported, because Parmenides does not work from a judgement to arrive at reality, as L. Stefanini states ("Essere e immagine in Parmenide", in *Giornale critico della filosofia antica*, XXXI, 1952, p. 1).

Regarding Plato and Aristotle, it is true that they sought to remove the Eleatic obscurity surrounding metaphysics. Plato did this with the "dissón", Aristotle with the analogy: "This means that they did not address themselves to Parmenides' system as such, but to the logical developments of his fundamental concept."[103] However, before it becomes a concept, the Eleatic being is an intuitive concept. We may state that Parmenides' metaphysics is above all, a doctrine of what is present to thought with ante-predicative immediacy. Hence the "eînai" determines the property of being, or state, or condition of presence in two ways: a) the being is present as pure existence (and not as utility or beauty), and its presence is absolute and self-founded; b) this presence is not a realised possibility. If this were the case, then being would need time as a field or stage into which it enters and from which it exits from being into non-being. However, for Parmenides' being exists before its possibility – nay more, being exists before its own differences, such as necessity, perfection, completeness, etc.[104] Being IS, hence it is necessary, absolute, perfect, complete, etc. Therefore, Parmenides' metaphysical problem is not "why being, although it is, must be or must continue to be". Rather, the problem is "why, although it is, it cannot not be". "Estin gàr eînai": being necessarily is, with its own well-founded presence. So, it is obvious that Aristotle's principle of non-contradiction cannot be applied to the Eleatic being, because in this principle the concept of time is a constituent factor ("*simul* esse et non esse").

Therefore, Parmenides' being is not the contingent as such, but a presence which is metaphysically founded on itself as an absolute value. "It now exists wholly, in its entirety" (fragment B VIII 6). It has no present and no past, because it is co-present ("oulomelés", fragments B VIIII 19 and 20). It is "homoion" and "synechés", homogeneous and completely full of being.[105]

3.3.1. *Eleatic Gnoseology and Being*

The present being is immediately perceived with a gnoseological process called affirmation or intuition, a process which precedes all judgements. In Parmenides' texts, this process is called the "way". Fragment B 8: "Only one way remains for the discourse that the being is". Fragment B 6 is even more interesting:

> It is necessary to say and think that the being is. Indeed, being is, and nothingness is not; I exhort you to consider these things. Therefore, I keep you far away from this first way of research, as likewise from the way on which mortals who know nothing err, people with two heads. Really, it is the uncertainty in their bosoms which directs their mistaken minds. . .

And also:

> Now, I will tell you – and listen to what I say – that those ways of research can only be thought: one that [being] is, and it is impossible for it not to be; the other that [being] is not and it is necessary that it not be. I say that this latter way

> precludes all research. In fact, you could not know something that is not, given that such a thing is not possible (fragment B 2).

Fragment B 4 confirms the act of intuition regarding being, when the goddess invites the philosopher to look ("leûssein") with his thought at faraway things as if they were present. This is not a laborious operation, but a capture of the mind by the being. Another significant text:

> Thought and the function of thought are the same thing, because you will not find thought without the being in which it is expressed. In fact, thought is, or it is nothing when outside of being (fragment B 8).

In fragment B 5 we find the peremptory statement: "being and thought are the same thing".

We should mention one thing while discussing these statements. The goddess communicates "the truth of being" as a "mythos", as revelation. Revelations (above and beyond symbolism) indicate direct contact of thought with being. Therefore, we deduce that in thought's first contact with being, truth is not a "conforming of the intellect with the thing" through a judgement ("intellectus adequatio ad rem"), almost as if being revealed itself as a predicate of existence. No, being is pre-predicative and coincides with the first contact with being.[106] *This first, intuitive level is followed by another*, when thought meditates and mediates the intuited being. In fragment VII, 5 we read: "But only with thought do you examine ("krínei") and decide the much-debated question asked by many". This interior reflection of being is called "nóema", or "lógos" ("krínei lógoi"), the concept or signs of being. Indeed, philosophy is a "discourse of certainty and thought regarding truth" (VIII, 50). Fragment B 6 (already quoted above) is significant here: "It is necessary to say and think that the being is". Therefore, after the intuitive and ecstatic affirmation, the mind proceeds to "think" (with a concept) and "say" (with a word) that same original being. Concepts and words are signs ("semêîa") of being, attributes of the single being. Note that the attributes are not universal predicates, but expressions of a single reality. Fragment VIII, 34–35 (quoted above) points out that thought is reflected in being ("phatízein"), and from here thought derives ("to noeîn"). Therefore, the "many signs" (VIII, 2) are attributes, such as: homogeneous, complete, total, indestructible, co-present, perfect. These are not partial determinations of being, nor universal abstractions, but rays from a single prism.

3.3.2. *A Third, Gnoseological Level*

Parmenides' metaphysical monism excludes the predication of being's attributes (as Öhler, Natorp and Stenzel underlined well), but it allows the determination of being's laws or principles. These are:

a) *the principle of non-change* (fragment VIII, 7–8), which, more or less, is given as follows: "ex nihilo nihil fit", or as fragment VII, 16 states: "The being is or is not"; if it is, "from the being, force of conviction will never allow that something different from being be born" (*ibid.*, 13). If it is not, "then how would it be born, and whence? I do not permit you to speak or think of non-being" (*ibid.*, 12);

b) *the principle of indestructibility*: "being cannot not be", or, as we read in that same text: "it is not possible for it not to be" (fragment II). This second principle is very much different from the Aristotelian principle of non-contradiction. Aristotle stated that while the being is (but could not be), it necessarily is. Whereas, the principle of indestructibility states that the being necessarily is;

c) *the principle of the third excluded*: there is no middle ground between being and non-being;

d) *the principle of identity*, through which being is always equal to itself. In fact, it would differ either in its being or in its non-being. It does not differ in its being, because nothing can differ

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from itself; it cannot differ in its non-being, because non-being is nothingness. Therefore, it does not differ.

3.4. *"Opinion" Opinion in Parmenides' Philosophy*

As we stated above, Parmenides in addition to the "way of truth", also allowed expressions of mortal opinions.[107] The "way of truth" is a bond for thought ("chré"), a force ("chreòn"), divine justice ("dike"), fate ("moîra"), with all these elements originating in the "chains of being". However, opinion ("doxa") is "mortal" (VIII, 52), the "opinion of mortals" (VIII, 28–32), and its object regards physical phenomena: the existence of fixed stars, the sun, the moon, the succession of light, and night and day, the succession of life and death through the generation and presence of the eros, etc.

Scholars debate the bond between the two ways. According to Guthrie, Parmenides did not establish any logical connection, because if the "doxa" is an illusory world, then what difference is there between the "doxa" and nothingness? On the contrary, K. Reinhardt held that the "doxa" has a primary role, because the "aletheia" should be explained through the "doxa" itself.

Today there are three prevalent opinions: *doxographic* (according to which Parmenides was referring to philosophical doctrines then in vogue, only to refute them: Heracliteans for Diels, Pythagoreans for Burnet, and doctrines in general for Heidel and Nestle); *hypothetical* (in which the teaching of the "doxa" is a part of Parmenides' philosophy, but only as a probabilistic and non-definitive appendix);[108] and *preparatory* (where the "doxa" is a preparation for the way of truth). We support the third solution, which is also shared by major scholars;[109] however, we support it not in the sense that the "doxa" could be dissolved to the point where it coincides with the "alétheia" (this is negated by Parmenides himself, fragment VIII, 54), but in the sense that the "doxa" is an obligatory way to enter into the light. The object of this "doxa" is fragmentary and apparent reality ("dokoûntai eînai"), which resides in the house of the night. This reality is not deception or falseness, but a precarious knowledge, as M. Heidegger explains (*Introduzione alla metafisica*, translated into Italian, p. 91). Therefore, the "doxa" is necessary as a method, and it possesses a certain logic – that of poetic language ("sémata", "onómata": VIII, 38–55). However, the words are veils and the views expressed are ephemeral forms.[110]

The being of the "doxa" is temporality, in equilibrium between the past ("éphu"), the present ("éasi") and the future ("teleutósousin"). The sum of this is a certain "physis", a presence gathered by the senses, a knowledge of things having a physical explanation (note that Parmenides was a physician!). Just as mathematics is a model of reality autonomous with respect to the model of physics, so (observed Guthrie) the world of the "aletheia" is different from that of the "doxa". It is not a "deception of false theories" ("gnômai"), but a coherent system of reality.

4. *Zeno of Elea*

4.1. *Introduction*

Parmenides' philosophy probably found immediate adversaries from the very start because of his paradoxical fundamental thesis that being is one and immutable. The echo of his words did not disappear even in Athens, because a hundred years after his visit there, Plato dedicated a dialogue (*Parmenides*) to him. This dialogue remains one of Plato's most obscure and difficult ones. It was Plato himself who called Parmenides "august and terrible" (*Theaetetus*, 183). Likewise Parmenides' disciple, Zeno the Eleatic, with his slender figure and subtle genius, left an indelible mark: not with the "sublime depth" (Plato) of his master, but with his dialectic abilities. In fact, Plato said that Zeno changed "philosophy" into "quarrel" ("philoneikia", *Parmenides* 128 e), without detracting from his intelligence. Hence Plato called Zeno the "Eleatic Palamedes", the ingenious hero of the school.

Born in Elea around 500 B.C., he quickly manifested his ingenuity and fierceness, first toward the tyrants of his land, whom (as Diogenes Laërtius wrote) "he preferred to the useless pride of the Athenians" (IX, 5, 28). He quickly became a follower of Parmenides, writing a polemic booklet entitled *Help*, or – according to others – *Disputes Against Philosophers.*[111] He wrote this in the Attic dialect to publicly defend his teacher's theses. According to Helias (*In Cat.* 109, 6, Busse) and Proclus (*In Parm.* 694, 24), this defence consisted in a reduction to the absurd of those who opposed the unity of being (40 arguments) and its immutability (5 arguments). We possess substantial extracts of many of his arguments, which were transcribed and minutely re-examined by Aristotle, Philoponus and Simplicius (*Phys* 97, 12).

At this point, we note that through the nineteenth century Zeno was always considered Parmenides' student and defender. It was Paul Tannery (*Pour l'histoire de la science hellène*, Paris 1881, 2nd edition 1930) who changed this interpretation and claimed he was an opponent of Pythagorean theses, according to which solid lines and bodies are pluralities resulting from infinitesimally small points. This thesis, which based itself on the indubitable connection of the Eleatic and Pythagorean schools, was extraordinarily fascinating and brought to its defence philosophers and scientists such as V. Brochard and G. Noel. In Italy, F. Enriquez and M. Mazziotta (*Le dottrine di Democrito d'Abdera*, Bologna 1948, pp. 25 ff.) reconsidered this new version and concluded that Zeno was a mathematical and logical genius. These aspects of Zeno's philosophy were even more authoritatively described by H. Hasse, H. Scholz and B. Russell, despite E. Zeller's strong opposition. It was G. Calogero (*Studi dell'eleatismo*, Rome 1933) who reconsidered Tannery's interpretation and once again placed Zeno among the members of the Eleatic school. This was later reinforced by Van der Waerden, N. B. Booth. These authors state that Zeno did struggle against pluralists in general (and hence against the Pythagoreans), but he did this from an Eleatic (metaphysical, not mathematical) point of view.[112] Nevertheless, we may state that, while Parmenides proposed a metaphysics of "being" ("tò eón"), Zeno's polemics were directed against the metaphysics of the "one" ("tò hén").

4.2. *Dialectical Arguments Against Multiplicity*

Zeno – examined in the light of the fragments we have – proposed four arguments against the possibility of multiplicity:

a) *let us admit that many beings exist.* Now, this is absurd, because they are numerically defined and undefined. They are defined because there are as many as we can establish. They are undefined because between two beings (or parts of beings) there is another; and, between the third and one of the original two there rests yet another; and so on, into infinity;[113]

b) *let us admit that beings are made up of geometric points.* Now, an absurdity arises: they simultaneously possess infinite size and no size. They are infinite in size because beings, given their infinite divisibility, possess an infinite sum of sizes; therefore, they are infinite in size. However, they have no size, because by definition the point has no extension; and the sum of points with no extension has no extension;[114]

c) *multiplicity exists in space.* Now, this implies the absurdity that the space ("topos") surrounding us is surrounded by a second space, which is encircled by a third, and so on into infinity. Therefore, space does not exist; but in that case, multiplicity does not exist either;

d) *multiplicity leads to contradictory properties.* For example, a kernel of grain produces no sound when it falls, but a sack of grain does create noise.[115] Therefore, multiplicity does not exist.

4.3. *Dialectical Arguments Against Movement*

Zeno has become famous, above all, for the so-called paradoxes of movement; whoever admits that movement exists creates a series of absurdities, which are today (as they were in antiquity) termed: the stadium (or dichotomy), Achilles, the arrow, and the racetrack (or masses).

The stadium: Movement never begins, because before a body reaches the halfway point of its travels, it must reach the halfway point of that halfway point. But this is possible only if it travels half of that latter distance, and so forth into infinity. Obviously, in this fashion movement never begins.

Achilles: Even if we admit that movement has begun, it does not continue. In other words, the slowest movement will never be reached by even the fastest movement. If a tortoise travelling along a road only a few yards in front, Achilles "fast-footed" will never reach the tortoise, because Achilles must first cover half the distance between the two. But this half distance is only covered after Achilles covers half of that half-distance, and so forth. In the meantime, the tortoise continues on without ever being passed, while Achille's run does not continue.

The arrow: In movement it does not move, because a moving body must occupy its own dimensions. Now, in each instant of its movement, an arrow occupies a space equal to its dimensions, while these dimensions do not possess movement. Therefore, the moving arrow is still; nothing is moving at the moment in which it occupies its own dimensions.

The masses or the race track: This argument has been studied (as we have stated above) by the defenders of Zeno the mathematician (Brochard and B. Russell, who recognizes Weierstrasse and Cantor as mathematicians who here perceived the implicit problem of infinitesimal calculus). Paci states that Zeno here foresaw Einstein's theory of relativity. To simplify the paradox through an example, Zeno works from the principle that if movement exists, then equal spaces are covered in equal times by bodies with equal velocity. Zeno states that the principle is violated if one admits that the same space is covered by two bodies going in opposite directions. For example, two trains travel one kilometre in opposite directions on two tracks in only half the time needed for the train travelling one kilometre by itself.[116]

5. *Melissus of Samo*

5.1. *Eleatism and its Systemisation*

While Zeno engaged in dialectics, Melissus was the scholar of "physics" in the Eleatic school because he sought to reconcile the "dóxa" and the "alétheia", even absorbing the former into the latter. Hence he transferred the attributes of physical reality to Parmenides' fundamental properties of being.

Still, we first ask a question: how did an Ionian like Melissus become familiarised with doctrines from the West? The response was supplied by Diogenes Laërtius, who wrote: "He was Parmenides' student, but he had cultural relations with Heraclitus as well." This leads us to the assumption that Melissus travelled to Greece; moreover, biographical notes from various sources describe him not only as a philosopher, but also a man of politics. For his strategic genius he was elected admiral of the fleet of Samus, which in 441 gained a temporary victory against the Athenian flotilla and freed the city of Miletus. This episode reveals the growing frustration of the allies with the Athenian hegemony established by Pericles.[117] Melissus wrote a philosophical volume entitled *On Nature or on Being*, following (as Aëtius states) in the footsteps of Parmenides "but not preserving his doctrine intact".

For these modifications, Aristotle called him coarse. Likewise in recent times, Zeller and Reinhardt considered him a philosophical dilettante. Calogero even considers him a "destroyer of Eleatism" (*op. cit.*, p. 58). However, more recently it has been observed that this misunderstanding derives from the fact that Melissus' ontology is even more existential than Parmenides', while Aristotle's ontology, partly bound to categoric being, understood Melissus' "physis" as matter, not as being's unity or total presence.[118] This led to Melissus' rehabilitation by Burnet, Apelt, Zafiropolos, Chiappelli and G. Reale.

Melissus' central idea is the absorption of Parmenides' "doxa" into the "alétheia". The world of opinion is not an autonomous, coherent and preparatory reality. Multiplicity is mutability, and time and space are part of being. Melissus admitted that reality is divisible; this undoubted fact was confronted with the illusory nature of sensory knowledge. Therefore, Aristotle and Philodemus insist on the falsity of sensible perception in Melissus. Fragment B 8 states that seeing, hearing, etc., do not give us true reality and that multiplicity is an illusion. "Therefore, it is evident that we did not see in a correct way and that those many things do not appear to us in a correct way. In fact, if they were really true, then they would not change" (fragment B 8).

Consequently, being is extended along with time. While in Parmenides being is only now (nyn"), enjoying a non-temporal punctual nature, for Melissus being "always was what it was and will always be" (B 2). Therefore, there is co-extension, co-temporality and eternal duration.[119]

As we can see, Parmenides' totality and immutability of being is safeguarded, but in a different way.

However, this is not all. Not only time, but space, is also absorbed into the single being (fragment B 8). Melissus especially insists that nothingness ("kenón") is absolutely extraneous to being, which is completely alien to Parmenides' thought. This indicates that Melissus' being fills every space, and hence is spatially infinite. Otherwise, it would not be a totality. Melissus declares, "It is impossible that there always be (aeí eînai") what is not completely being" (fragment B 2).

Therefore, we would say that while Parmenides' being is completely concentrated on itself, and its perfection is interior, co-present and determined ("tetelesménon"), Melissus' being is, on the contrary, "always" and "infinite". Hence we have the deduction of the latter's unity. We read in Melissus' texts: "If it is infinite, then it must be one. In fact, if there were two, then they could not be infinite, but one would have a limit in the other" (B 5). Therefore, it is also the best being. "Nothing can be better than what truly is" (B 8), in the sense that being does not even have a body (B 9).

This latter statement makes an interpretation of Melissus' thought difficult. Guthrie[120] noted this when he observed: how is it possible to postulate a being without body, which at the same time would be full and compact, possessing thickness ("páchos")? This point can be partially resolved by observing that Melissus had not yet arrived at a consideration of the categories "materialist" and "spiritualist". Melissus' being is neither body, nor spirit. Later philosophers clarified Melissus' rich and paradoxical thought.

6. *Concluding Reflections on Eleatic Philosophy*

The Eleatic school's merit rests in having established a relation between being, thinking and speaking. One states what one thinks, and one thinks what is. A clarification of being's value and the paradoxical negation of change still remained (so much so that Diogenes of Synope, when he heard Zeno's arguments two centuries later, rose silently from his seat and began pacing back and forth). In short, it still remained to safeguard phenomena such as movement, the multiplicity of beings and their variety. The "aletheia" was a beautiful word which rose in contrast with the daily facts of a varied, changing and multifaceted world. The unity of being, defended so strongly by the last Eleatic, Melissus, posed problems which did not escape the strong grip of Eleatic metaphysics. The solution was attempted by Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Democritus, and later Plato and Aristotle.

CHAPTER FIVE

PHILOSOPHIES OF TRANSITION

EMPEDOCLES

1. *Introduction*

The Eleatics raised two important questions: one gnoseological ("aletheia" or "doxa"?) and the other ontological (is being one or many?). Empedocles, Anaxagoras and the Atomists responded to both questions. Empedocles responded to the gnoseological question with the principle that knowledge is one, with no distinction between senses and reason. On the ontological level, he admitted a few fundamental beings which possess all the properties of Eleatic being. Regarding the gnoseological problem, Anaxagoras entrusts himself entirely to reason, negating an authentic cognitive capacity for the senses and resolving the ontological problem with the existence of the infinitesimal, which is Eleatically immutable. The Atomists will develop Anaxagoras' ideas, although they were hostile to the latter. As we can see, these three philosophical currents represent attempts to respond to Eleatic theses, but their results were unsatisfactory. Hence they laid the foundations of a profound crisis, and highly prejudiced men such as the Atomists and Sophists took the problem to its ultimate conclusions.

Chronologically, the first of these philosophers was Empedocles of Agrigentum (492–420?), a man of "antiquity who lived in the shadow of an ending Hellenic medieval age".[121] In truth, this was the period when the tyrants' dominion (in Agrigentum the rulers had been Theron in 476 and later his son Trasideus), under pressure from the masses, underwent a gradual decline in the whole Greek world.[122] Empedocles, with an aristocratic family and upbringing, was educated in Pythagorean and Parmenidean philosophy. He took to travelling in purple in a silk cloak and was enthusiastically received for his noble bearing, fiery oratory, fascination and fame as a conjuror. He travelled to Calabria (Turii) and Greece, where he won literary contests. However, his interests also included an investigation of nature; hence he is also considered philosopher, scientist, poet and charlatan. He is also considered a type of Cagliostro with his head covered by a laurel wreath, invited to cure the ill, dry out swamps with magical rites (as when he purportedly imprisoned the marshy swamps infesting Selinus into goatskins he made himself). Therefore, some consider him the founder of the Sicilian medical school, where Philistion (Plato's contemporary) graduated. It is said that Gorgias, the most famous Sophist, was his disciple and that he introduced dialectics and the fiery, suggestive oratory of his homeland to Athens.

Although he probably died in Peleponnesus, his death is also shrouded in legend: one version states that after supping with his disciples, he mysteriously disappeared into a globe of light; a second claims that he committed suicide by throwing himself from the top of Mount Aetna in order to create the belief that he was a god. Horatius added a stinging irony to this legend: the volcano vomited forth the philosopher's bronze sandals . . .

2. *Works and Philosophy*

Diogenes Laërtius says that Empedocles wrote lyrics, tragedies and other poetic compositions. According to the same author, his greatest works were a 5000-verse cosmological poem entitled *On Nature* and a 600-verse lustral poem entitled *Purifications*. What we now possess of these poems are 350 verses of the former and a few verses of the latter. However, the two poems are thematically different; the first discusses cosmological, chemical, biological and gynecological theses, while the second has a religious atmosphere, proposing an ascetic lifestyle to escape the cycle of rebirths. Moreover, the religion resting at his cathartic base in not completely in agreement with the Olympian religion.[123] Hence arose the disputes concerning the relation between the two poems. Some, like H. Diels (1878) and J. Bidez (*La biographie d' Empedocle*, Gand 1894) claim that the two poems were written in two historical periods.

Other authors go further and speak of Empedocles' conversion from a form of materialism to a philosophy concentrating on mystagogy and worship. This is hypothesised by Otto Kern, Zeller and Russell. These authors also observe that the physical poem does not mention the soul's destiny, and that none of the four elements are mentioned in the lustral poem.

A third hypothesis claims that the two poems' opposition is only a prejudice of modern historians, who have not succeeded in reconciling Empedocles' interests in scientific research and the religious spirit. Moreover, H. Kahn observes that some elements of the religious poem (for example, the "daímon") are connected with the cosmological poem. The "daímon" bonds the four elements together and is connected with the "philía" (or "philótes", or "Aphrodites"), which supports the human edifice.[124] Guthrie is even more peremptory: the attribution of fragments to one or the other poem was performed by modern philologists based on their own preconceptions. Therefore, the whole problem of opposition falls into a vicious circle; the conflict between religion and science is a category of last-century man.[125] At the most, we can discuss only a religious naturalism.[126] This opinion seems the most probable.

3. *Empedocles' Cosmology*

Empedocles proposed his *philosophy of the cosmos* working from common experience, not in its vulgar meaning (he exhorts people not to believe in only the eye and the ear: " . . . know everything insofar as it is evident", B I 21, 35).[127] Reality manifests itself not only in its undebatable multiplicity (Heraclitus), composition (Anaximander, Anaximenes), but also according to certain propositions of a divine character (therefore, Jäger terms Empedocles' cosmology a cosmogony).

Regarding *multiplicity*, Empedocles refutes the Ionian theses that everything is water (Thales), or air (Anaximenes), or fire (Heraclitus). Multiplicity is explained by admitting the *composition* of four "roots" ("rhizómata" in Greek) – water, earth, air and fire – which correspond to the four fundamental contraries: wet, dry, cold and hot.

Hence the third law of *proportions*. Just as the baker makes bread according to the correct measure of water, flour and fire (B 25), likewise the four elements combine in various proportions and produce the variety of things (B 11). In a lively comparison, Empedocles refers to the work of a painter, who with four colors (B 91) – white, black, red and yellow – paints everything:

> Just as painters produce their multi-coloured walls, being intelligent experts in their field, when their hands create the various tints which they harmonically mix, some in greater measure and some in lesser, as they create figures similar to everything (B 23, 15–19).

The superior crystalline heaven consists of pure air, or ether, frozen like ice. Rocks have a Plutonic origin from the fire burning in the earth's cavity (Aetna's lava?).

Aristotle later called these four roots "stoicheîa", elements, assigning a technical term to a chemical conception which existed until the times of Lavoisier. In fact, for Empedocles the elements possess the properties of the Eleatic being: they are eternal, indestructible, conscious, vital, qualitative (not quantitative, as Democritus held) and divine. Empedocles even gives a mythological name to each root: Zeus is fire, Hera or Juno is earth, Hedoneus is air and Nestis is water.

The combination of elements or roots does not produce compact bodies, but leaves gaps or pores where these same elements circulate in a perpetual circle, creating various weights and masses. This circulation also permits knowledge ("idem eodem cognoscitur"), which is a flux of elements from one body to another, from one pore to another. It is true that Empedocles demonstrates the originally elementary nature of the roots by referring to a clepsydra. A capped clepsydra (we would call it a bottle) thrown in the water does not allow the water to enter, and hence the two elements remain distinct (B 97); but nature provides for their continuous exchange and movement. Indeed, the more perfect bodies are, the more they result from harmonic proportions of the elements of which they are comprised. Blood, which for Empedocles was "the principle seat of consciousness, is composed of four elements of almost equal proportion, with about 25/100 of each".[128] Also, human bones consist of 2/8 earth, 4/8 fire and 2/8 water (B 96 and 97).

Moreover, the combination of the "roots" is the reason for certain phenomena, which in Empedocles' time were the object of stupefaction and curiosity: centrifugal force, magnets, light reflection in mirrors. The imperfect cosmogony we peruse in his fragments permits us to state that the fixed stars are embedded in the crystalline heaven, while movement would be allowed to the moon, the planets and the sun. The moon would only be air, which, after separating itself from fire, solidifies as hail.

For the proportional combination of the four elements, Empedocles introduced two structural forces into his cosmogony, the causal pair of love and hate. However, note that their function is not to intrinsically transform the four elements; nothing becomes, nothing is destroyed, and everything is eternal. "There is no means through which something would arise from what earlier did not exist and through which what exists would perish. This would be a vain thing without any terminus. In fact, [being] will always be, wherever we may look" (B 6). Therefore, life and death is not the goal; mixing and separating is the goal of love and hate, through a universal and eternal cycle dominated by the two forces. Love alternates with hate. In one moment the elements are combined so as to obtain perfect being through the force of love; at other times hate predominates, when the cosmic order is disturbed. Following is a significant text:

> See how many heads have grown without necks, bare arms are formed, without shoulders, and single eyes remain alone on some faces. Also, solitary limbs . . . (B 57).

If the two forces struggle, then the effects are even more deleterious: " . . . the limbs combine by chance, as others join with those which were produced in great numbers . . . ; hence they generate many forms with a double face and a triple thorax; while in other instances humans grow with bovine necks . . . " (*ibid.*, 61).

This divine systole and diastole of the cosmos is cyclical, operating according to a mysterious justice where there prevails either a "sad and cursed" (B 109) and "insane" (B 115 and 14) hate, or Aphrodites, the cosmic eros (as Hesiod had already suggested). However, the epochs of the world tend toward a final unity under the dominion of the *Sphairos*, which is the third metaphysical structure of reality. It is infinite, equal in all places, and absolutely peaceful, as it belongs to the original phase of the first cosmic cycle (cosmic egg?), which echoes the Golden Age of ancient mythology.[129] It does not take place mechanically, but through a final attraction. It is called "migma" by Aristotle, but "Monoeidés" by Aëtius, or an homogeneous monad in which individual beings are gathered together and can no longer be distinguished.

4. *The Lustral Poem*

Leaving aside all the historical debates, the most probable conclusion seems to me to be that the physical poem was a type of preparation for the lustral one. Indeed, in many fragments, knowledge of the physical world takes on a magical character with an assumption of the fallacious value of the senses. Physical knowledge becomes the realisation of a mystical thrust of cosmic sympathy; the four elements are divine, love and hate are divine, the Sphairos is divine. Therefore, man's highest cognitive act is the "pistis" (B 114); it is imperfect in science, like the first light in the morning, but it radiates perfectly at noontime as "truth" ("alethés", B 114) through rites of purification.[130] There is a common knowledge of the flux of the elements; we know the earth with the earth, water with water, air with air, and fire with fire. The four elements circulate through space like particles, enter into pores and join with their respective element. Thus, sensations are due to the aperture of tightness of the pores and to the position of the four elements within the sensory sphere. Fire is more internal in the eye, and with fire we see the colour white; the water follows, with which we see black; the earth, with which we see other colours; etc. Hence nocturnal animals have eyes with a prevalence of fire; daytime animals have a prevalence of water to compensate for the exterior light. However, this materialistic gnoseology is surpassed by mysticism, which Empedocles uses to arrive beyond the senses, to the mysterious divine light reached through initiation:[131]

> So, by piously keeping your established beliefs with pure practices, you will contemplate ["epopteusis"] all the doctrines [of the Teacher], they will always be present for you, and you will acquire many others, because each one will grow in the intimacy of life where each belongs to reality ['physis']" (B 110).

This knowledge reveals that all reality is animate ("phrónesin échein"), that man is only spirit, since the body is "earth which encloses man" (B 148). However, human life on this earth is sadness (B 118 and 119), dominated by palingenesis (B 115, 118 and 137), in that the soul leaves heaven and descends onto the earth "under the vault of this cavern" (B 120) and lives an "inauspicious sojourn" (B 121). Man possesses a "psyché", a totality of the four elements which separate at death and form other bodies. Still, beyond the "psyché", Empedocles admits the existence of the "daimon" (B 126), which is like a deity (cfr. B 59) aspiring to the divine.[132] Therefore, it is necessary for men to avoid defiling themselves with guilt, commit blood crimes (B 128) and eat impure foods (such as beans – B 141). On the contrary, men will wash their hands in the lustral waters (B 143) to prepare for the great return.

CHAPTER SIX

ANAXAGORAS OF CLAZOMENAE

1. *Introduction*

Anaxagoras appears on the scene using a style very much different from Empedocles – not poetry, but concise prose, not mysticism, but rigorous science. Moreover, it seems that Anaxagoras was the first cosmopolitan man. To citizens who accused him of a lack of patriotism, he responded, "My homeland is heaven" (A 1). Following the cultural path of Anaximander, Anaximenes and Melissus, he renounced his hereditary riches and travelled to Egypt and Chaldea (cfr. Cicero, *De Nat. deor.* I, 11, 26). Diogenes Laërtius recounts a significant episode: "To whomever asked why he was born, he replied, 'For the contemplation of the sun, the moon and heaven' " (II, 3, 10). The scientific spirit which animated the philosopher's life is manifested in his interpretation of a meteorite's fall, when he said that "all heaven is made up of rocks: it remains in cohesion as long as the rotation is fast. It falls as soon as it is released" (*ibid.*).

We do not know when he left Ionia and came to Athens, where he remained for 30 years.[133] He immediately joined the group of sages of the city, a group which included Euripides and was led by Pericles. Pericles and his wife Aspasia were also the group's patrons.

With Anaxagoras, philosophy entered Athens, where it would remain for a millennium. It was in Athens that he wrote his philosophical treatise entitled *De Natura.* Vitruvius also attributes an essay on solar rays to him; Plutarch credits him with a work on the quadrature of a circle, while others claim he wrote about eclipses.

He formulated a variety of cosmological hypotheses, which are extraneous to this volume; but it was certainly these hypotheses that led to his making enemies. Pericles' enemies, such as Thucydides, Phidias and others incited a certain Diopte (or Cleon) to accuse Anaxagoras of impiety and of (Philo–Persian) "Medism". Pericles intervened so Anaxagoras would not be sentenced to death, but the ruler could not prevent the philosopher's exile, which probably took place in 431. In fact, Anaxagoras continued to affirm, against common superstition, "that the sun is a mass of red-hot metal" (Diogenes Laërtius, II, 3, 12). He lived in exile on the island of Lampsacus, where he died in 428, when he was over 70 years old.

2. *Philosophy of Anaxagoras*

Anaxagoras abolished the old doctrine of the four elements. Immutable divine being is not the privileged stature of a few beings, but of an indefinite number of "seeds" even more fundamental than the elements, which he called "particles" ("mere") and "things" ("chrémata"). Aristotle and his successors renamed these entities "homeomeriae", or "equal particles". Anaxagoras' reasoning was as follows: water-air-earth-fire rest within the fundamental matter, which thus precedes the elements themselves. Therefore, matter is composed of infinite material particles, each having its own properties.

In formulating this idea of the infinitesimal, Anaxagoras was probably inspired by biological and physical facts.[134] How is it possible for the bread to become blood and bone (B 10) if we do not admit that particles of blood and bone exist in the bread? This also applies to the burning of forests: how can we explain that from green branches a flame is unleashed, if we do not admit that latent fire particles exist within the leaves? Therefore, the whole contains the whole (B 6); palingesis is explained by the fact that, in the present composition, the parts contain the whole which is in "actu". As Vlastos explains, this potentiality for things to become all things is a real quality, and not only a possibility, because Anaxagoras stated that all the parts are in act, even if the body is a true composition.

Still, how do we explain this paradox? In ancient times, Aristotle did not succeed in providing a framework for Anaxagoras' doctrine. Today some researchers claim that he was opposed to the indivisibility of the atom, a doctrine proposed earlier by Democritus. J. Zafiropulos stated that the seeds ("spérmata") must be understood as "quality-points", in that they have both a geometric and existential character;[135] this method both avoids mechanicism and introduces the infinitesimal. One text states: "Smallness does not exist within the smallest; only a smaller exists. In fact, being ["eón"] is not non-being" (B 3). Another text gives the individual "seeds" the character of "moîra", a structure fixed by destiny in the cosmic order with its own ontological statute.

However, these metaphysical subtleties still leave some difficulties behind. If the particles are infinitesimal, then they are invisible. Even admitting that (as fragment B 1 states) some of them are infinitely large, the gnoseological problem of how we come to know anything of these infinitesimal entities still remains. Anaxagoras takes recourse in the Eleatic principle that "the Greeks do not correctly use the words 'to be born' and 'to perish', because no thing is born or perishes; it only mixes with things that already exist, and then it separates from those same things. Therefore, it would be more correct to say 'mix' and for 'perish', 'separate'" (B 17). This is so because phenomena hide true reality ("òpsis adélon tà phainómena" – B 21 a).

3. *The Mind*

Anaxagoras went beyond simple description of elementary principles of the cosmos, instead approaching the question of their origins.[136] Here we see the originality of the Ionian philosopher. He postulates an original chaos where all the particles were in a state of confusion ("all things were a mixture", as in a chaos, or "migma" – B 6). At a certain time a whirling movement began, and contraries originated from this: hot-cold, wet-dry. Bodies grouped themselves according to their weight; the heavy ones fell down, while the light ones rose, with the earth remaining immobile in the centre. Movement diminishes toward the universe's periphery (fragment B 2).

However, this movement was not spontaneous. Anaxagoras had to explain the universe's order and unity. He did not postulate an infinity of worlds (unlike Thales and Anaximander), or disorder and chaos (unlike Democritus). For the reason Anaxagoras provided a Mind ("noûs"), which not only imprints a rotational movement on the seeds, but dominates them throughout their development as well.

However, in the 24 fragments of Anaxagoras which Diels provides us, the philosopher introduces a divine Mind only in four: 11, 12, 13, 14. This Mind is transcendent, active, infinite and free.

Transcendence: "In fact, Mind is the purest and finest of all things" (B 12); the adjectives "fine" and "pure", which echo Heraclitus' "separate" ("kechorisménon") represent an attempt to express a super-material reality (Mazzantini). However, Anaxagoras offers a reason for the "spiritual" character of this mind: if things were combined to be it, then "the combined things would be an obstacle" *(ibid.)*.

Activity: The intelligence "possesses every knowledge of everything and has the maximum power ['ischyei mégiston']" and "dominates over all . . . both over those having life, the inferior ones and the lowest ones". Note the expression "the mind knows everything" ("pánta égno o noûs") "and dominates everything" ("pánta krateî" *(ibid.)*.

Infinity: "And the intelligence gave an impulse to universal rotation, so that rotational movement was realised from the beginning. The movement of rotation began with the small, and it progressed toward the greater, and it will progress still more" (ibid.). Also: "Everything that will be, and everything that was and what now is not, and all that is, all this is directed by the intelligence" ("pánta diekósmese noûs").

Freedom: The intelligence is "autokratés": not only does it dominate all, but it dominates itself – that is, it possesses freedom (Ciurnelli, Zeller, Arleth).

Two concepts remain lacking in Anaxagoras' highly original vision, both of which were attained by later philosophers: the immaterial nature and the creativity of the Mind. It is also significant that Anaxagoras never used the word "o theòs", even if Cicero and Aëtius unduly identify the "noûs" with God.

All this demonstrates the cosmological character of the Mind. It was introduced by Anaxagoras to explain the universe's order, not to provide an ideal and religious tension of man toward God. This lack will be noted in Plato's *Phaedo* (97 ff.), when (through Socrates) he declares his disappointment with such a narrow and mechanical vision of the Mind.

PART II

SECOND PERIOD
THE PRE-SOCRATIC CRISIS

CHAPTER ONE

THE ATOMISTS

1. *Introduction*

It has become standard practice to give the history of Western philosophy from its origins through Socrates the name of pre-Socratic philosophy. This habit is based on elaborate studies of some illustrious authors who simplify Greek thought before Socrates by characterising it as cosmological. Hence this period becomes a period imprisoned by a naturalistic vision which would be completely outside any humanistic interests. The most notable authors who have done this are Zeller, Burnet and P. Tannery, who even states that thinkers before Socrates were "physiologists" and not "philosophers", following an Aristotelian model we have already examined above.

There is no doubt that this simplification captures the common foundations of philosophical thought in the sixth and fifth centuries, but some problems remain. First of all, we must take into consideration the religious character of all the philosophy in question, as Karl Joel demonstrated in his *Der Ursprung der Naturphilosophie aus dem Geiste der Mystik*, Jena, 2nd edition, 1926. Second, we cannot forget the recurring humanism of all the schools we examined earlier, as was explained by W. Jäger in *Paideia*, translated into Italian, op. cit., and R. Mondolfo, *Alle origini della filosofia della cultura*, Bologna 1956. Third, we must remember the indictment of this thesis proposed by Harold

Cherniss in *Aristotle's Criticism of Presocratic Philosophy*, Baltimore 1935.

We believe that the passage from so-called pre-Socratic cosmology to Socrates' humanism and Plato's and Aristotle's metaphysics was not a violent and sudden transition. A thread exists between the Eleatic school, Protagoras and Socrates. This succession includes Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Archelaus, the Atomists and Diogenes of Apollonia. In other words, before Socrates, Ionian – Italian thought went through a twofold crisis: one turned toward the past and another directed at the future. The former led to the most radical and paradoxical extremes of Eleatic metaphysics, while the other profited from the socio-cultural conditions brought on by Pericles' Athenian democracy by spreading religious and moral relativism. The former was a *metaphysical crisis*, which degenerated into a physical crisis; the second was a *cultural crisis* which generated into the Sophistic movement.

However, it remains to be said that the cultural crisis which originated the Sophistic movement is not easily categorised in a few formulas. Consequently, the Sophists themselves created a new problem, which was reflected in the naturalistic crisis. Were Sophists the discoverers of subjectivity, or were they educators or teachers of the Athenian democratic tradition? Or were they bound to old Eleatic philosophy? Or should they be compared to Socrates? In order to respond to these questions without entering a vicious circle (assuming a cultural crisis, only to then prove that same crisis), we think it would be helpful to follow the order of events, beginning from the Atomists, who – as we said above – represent the dissolution of Eleatic metaphysics.

2. *Leucippus and Democritus: Lives, Writings and Fortunes*

The founder of the Atomist school was Leucippus. We know little about the year and place of his birth, but it is significant that Diogenes Laërtius gives him three homelands (Elea, Abdera and Miletus); the fact that he is called a disciple of Zeno (by Diogenes

Laërtius) and of Melissus (by others) is also significant.

These uncertainties (which led to the absurd nineteenth-century pretence of negating his existence, as E. Rhode did) prove at least one thing: Leucippus' dependence on Eleatic philosophy.

He was probably born in Miletus around 480 B.C.; from there he travelled to Elea, and from there to Abdera.[137] That city, which was an obligatory passage for Persian armies then invading Thessalia, became an important cultural centre. Therefore, from a city considered by the Greeks a land of boors, it quickly became a favourite location for scientists, such as Hippocrates, Hecataeus, Nausiphanes and later Anaxarch. It is probably true there were also the famous "magicians" behind the Persian armies, who were learned in astrology and the occult sciences.

Leucippus composed *The Great Cosmology*, a work which was widely read and commented on in antiquity, as Aristotle himself mentions indirectly (A 7). This work also seems to have been developed more in depth by his disciple, Democritus.

Democritus was born in Abdera about 460. At first his tutors were "some Wizards and Chaldeans, whom king Xerxes had left for his father as tutors" (Diogenes Laërtius, IX, 7, 34), in Herodotus' narration. After studying astronomy, he dedicated himself to following Leucippus. He travelled widely (A 299), but it seems romantic to believe that he went all the way to India.[138]

It is entirely possible that he travelled to Egypt; but he certainly spent time in Italy, where he made direct contact with Pythagoreans (and even, according to one testimonial, with Philolaus – Diogenes Laërtius, IX, 7, 38). The fact that he later vehemently attacked Anaxagoras demonstrates two things: his aversion to a finalistic concept of the universe and his disgust at not having been admitted into Pericles' circle, since he was discharged from Athens. It is curious that his contemporaries, such as Gorgias, Aristophanes, Thuycidides, Xenophon and Plato, do not mention him. In Diogenes Laërtius we read the following interesting indication: "It seems that . . . Democritus came to Athens and did not seek to become well-known, because he rejected glory. He knew Socrates, but was not known by Socrates, and his words were, "I came to Athens, and no one knew me" (*ibid.*, 36). He wrote prodigiously; and if we believe Diogenes Laërtius, the philosopher's collection of writings numbered 61, divided into five groups of tetralogies: ethics (I – II tetralogy), physics (II – IV tetralogy), mathematics (V – IX tetralogy), music and philology (X – XI tetralogy), arts and mechanics (XII – XIII tetralogy).

Of all this, only 298 fragments have remained, along with the testimony of philosophers like Aristotle and doxographers like Theophrastus. Here we are surely faced with a multifaceted genius rivaled only by Aristotle. However, all the attempts of Marxist and contemporary materialistic historians to make him the greatest ancient thinker are motivated by the fact that he was "substantially an atheist thinker".[139] Moreover, the most notable fragments we possess regard ethics and not his deterministic cosmology.

Many facetious stories have been told about him, leaving the impression of a man with witty speech and actions, full of forgetfulness and abstraction. For this he was called "the laughing philosopher". It seems he died at over 100 years of age.

3. *Philosophy of Leucippus and Democritus*: *Physics*

The point of departure for an exposition of Atomistic physics is physical theory; their interpretation of the world was Eleatic, but they had already altered the thought of Melissus and Anaxagoras. In other words, they wanted to safeguard the Eleatic being and the mutability and multiplicity of phenomena. Therefore, an intrinsic bond was necessary between being and becoming.

The solution to this problem was proposed with the introduction of a modification of Parmenides' principle that being is and non-being is not. Instead, Democritus stated that both being ("dén") and non-being ("medén" or "oudén") exist (B 49). Being is the solid-full, and the non-being is empty; but, the full solid requires emptiness in order to safeguard local movement ("phorá") and multiplicity. In fact, having admitted the vacuum ("tò kenón"), solid bodies ("nastá") can fill the vacuum through a mechanical movement of pure translation.

These solid bodies have various denominations in the two philosophers' exotic vocabulary living on the periphery of the Greek world: they are called forms ("idéai", B 140), beings ("ònta", "etéa"), "natures" ("physis", B 58), "un-cuttables", or atoms ("átomoi" in the feminine, "tò átomon" in the neutral),[140] corpuscles or "minima" (although Democritus admits the existence of atoms as large as the earth), "simplicia" (Leucippus, B 15) or bodies which are not further divisible.

These entities have the *Eleatic properties* of eternity (in time), infinity (of number), indestructibility and non-generability (regarding their ontological constitution), unalterability (in their relation to the qualities, to which they are effectively not susceptible Leucippus, B 13).

They have three categories, or ontological differences: position ("diatigé"), order ("tropé") and figure ("rhysmós")[141] (Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 985 b 4; Leucippus B 6). Their *position* can be anterior or posterior: for example, the letters A B C of the alphabet can be organised as ABC, BCA, CBA, etc. In their *order*, atoms can be round, cubic, pyramidal (we are still a long way from Bohr's spherical atom!), etc. Their *figure* can be inclined, vertical, horizontal, etc.).

Consequently, the central problem of philosophy is not the deepening of being, but the explanation of phenomena, albeit through the filter of Eleatic premises. Metaphysics degenerates into physics.

The problem of man is physical, since he is a mass of atoms; the soul is merely a clot of nobler and more fiery atoms. Through the vacuum, man can receive atoms from below and from above, in that through the flux of atoms he can receive, smell, taste and nourish himself. He receives celestial atoms during insanity, epilepsy and poetic exaltation.

The gods are merely agglomerations of nobler, more fiery and psychic atoms which exercise a beneficial or negative influence on the soul (B 77). However, to believe in personal beings who occupy themselves with men is mere superstition. Man is often shocked by the terror of natural phenomena, the greatness or power; and thus he attributes these phenomena to the powers of supernatural beings. In reality, everything is atoms; nature is merely a perennial and casual play of atoms. Therefore, "Men invoke health from the gods with prayers, and they do not know that this is within man's power" (B 234; this fragment inspired Marx's atheistic materialism). The gods are apparitions of atoms at the watch. Venus is only germinal energy (B 17), and the gods of Homer are only symbols of these energies of natural forces.

The world is not one. Infinite worlds exist, which transform themselves constantly. Therefore, we cannot attribute a determined finality to the cosmos. We should note the intrinsic absurdity of Leucippus' and Democritus' deterministic principle: "Nothing happens without reason, but everything happens through a reason of necessity" (B 2) and the principle of universal causality (Dante's "he who the world by chance placed"). It is necessary that everything be chaotic. For example, it is necessary, but casual, that the world rests at the centre of the universe and does not fall, because it is round. This was used by Democritus to explain the magnet, the Milky Way and biological questions: just as the pebbles find themselves together by chance on the beach (B 34), or as the sieve separates the nails without making a previous choice. In fact, if everything takes place through the pure movement of atoms according to their disposition, order and figure, then generation, corruption or death in the world does not really exist. All that exists is an exchange of atoms regulated by fortuitous encounters through a whirling movement. To conclude, Democritus' physics are a compromise between Pythagorean and Eleatic philosophy. According to the Pythagoreans, reality is made up of geometric points (an invisible dust); according to the Eleatics, reality is made up of a single and immutable being. The Atomists would say that both were wrong. The truth lies in the synthesis:

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there are many beings (as the Pythagoreans said), but they are eternal, immutable and indestructible (as the Eleatics said).

4. *The Gnoseological Problem*

Obviously, the Atomists' physics had to account for sense perception.[142] which, above and beyond a purely geometric and dynamic vision of the universe, manifests sounds, colours, odours and other secondary qualities. The Atomists negate the existence of these secondary qualities and affirm only the primary qualities bound to the atom: size, extension, movement, quantity and time. The negation of the secondary qualities is proposed in two versions, which are contradictory: on one hand, Democritus states that the perception of secondary qualities depends on temperamental ("krásis", "héxis") conditions ("diáthesis") of the subject.[143] He states that "in reality, we do not know anything unvaried, but only things that change according to the disposition ("diathéke") of our body and of what penetrates or resists the body" (B 9). Therefore, Democritus stated that "sweet is pure conventional opinion ['nomoï'], the heat is an opinion ['doxa'], cold is an opinion, colour is an opinion; only the atoms and the vacuum are truth ['eteêi']" (B 9).

On the other hand, Democritus abandons this subjective and relativistic explanation and discovers an objectivistic motivation of an Eleatic type: the atoms are eternal and immutable, and hence they are not subject even to the contraries, hot-cold and wet-dry. They are "lacking quality and impassable" (apóious kaì apatheîs", B 57). The so-called sensations of taste and colour are explained through the order, disposition and figure of atoms (B 126). Aristotle reminds us that Democritus reduced the white to the smooth, the black to the rough, and continues by "similarly reducing even tastes to atomic figures" (ibid.). A page from Theophrastus is even more vivid. Taste is explained in the following fashion: acid = small, sinuous, fine atoms; sweet = round, agile, not very small atoms; sour = large, angular atoms which enter into the veins, obstruct them, and act as astringents in the intestine; bitter = small, smooth, round, viscous and sticky atoms; salty = large atoms with many curves, which are not smooth or scalene; spicy = small, angular atoms (*De sensu et sensato*, pp. 63 ff.).

Democritus justifies atheism with contradictory arguments, referring at one point to materialistic gnoseology (a flux of fiery atoms in the soul), and later to sociology (religion is the product of superstitious terror – B75). Likewise in gnoseology, Democritus – as Theophrastus himself notes – falls into a flagrant contradiction ("mégiston enantîon") by first adducing a relativistic, subjectivist motivation (the perceiving subject) and later arriving at an objectivistic (but postulatory) motivation (the exclusive existence of the primary qualities).

Even if Democritus were not a skeptic, as G. Capone Braga observed, then he still sowed the seeds for its later development by his disciples.[144]

5. *Democritus' Ethics*

Democritus surprises historians when he leaves the field of cosmological theories and confronts aesthetic and ethical subjects. We immediately find a significant precedent regarding the man; in one fragment we read that man is a "microcosm" (B 34), a most singular being different from the universe and its synthesis. He is also significant for his notes on poetic inspiration: "The poet, when he writes, is stimulated by an enthusiasm and a divine madness ("met'enthusiasmôi kaì hieroû pneúmatos); and he combines the images and sentiments emitted by the gods and composes excellent things" (fragment 18).

He is even more surprising in his ethical doctrine, which is based on three principles: a) the foundation of moral life is respect of one's own dignity ("aidôs", B 264); b) the ethical means are moderation or prudence, which choose honest and useful goods, which vary for each person ("euthambìa", "euthymia" – B 169; "euestò" = well-being). The goal is peace of the conscience, accompanied by a certain ascetical rationalism, the absence of every superstitious fear (B 68 a 1) crowned by friendship with one's peers (B 99).

Faced with such a marked dissonance between Democritus' physical materialism and such elevated ethics, historians have tried in various ways to understand the connection between the two. For example, it has been asked how Democritus could state that "good and truth are equal in all men" (B 69), and it seems that he also managed to be the first to place "moral conscience" ("syneidesis") at the centre of moral life, when cosmologically man is described as a mass of atoms, albeit more noble ones. There are two opinions: some authors claim that there is an intrinsic relation between his cosmology and ethics, in that he deduces systematic ethics from materialistic premises.[145] Opposed to this thesis, C. J. De Vogel states that Democritus did not really have an ethical-philosophical system, but merely a collection of moral maxims or proverbs.[146] This difference of opinion also holds for other authors. In our humble opinion, the question cannot be resolved as it stands, because the fragments do not prove either solution, even if the second hypothesis seems more probable to me.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LATER NATURALISTS

Hippias, Diogenes of Apollonia, Archelaus

Around 450, the spread of Pythagorean and Eleatic ideas provoked not only the phenomenon of Atomism, but also an eclectic form of naturalism which shows the general sense of loss and confusion of the time. The most famous names among this group are Hippias, Diogenes of Apollonia and Archelaus. The first, who was probably Italian, proposed a return to Thales and Heraclitus by affirming that the cosmic principles were water and fire. Still, Aristotle does not consider him particularly important (A 37).

Diogenes of Apollonia (480?–423?), an Albanian city today called Valon, underwent the influence of Anaxagoras and the Atomists, but was a firm supporter of monism. His reasoning (as it was referred to us by Aristotle) is the following: if we admit that water-air-earth-fire exist, then how is it possible that there be such an extraordinary variety of beings and transformations? The earth could not be the origin for a plant, with its green, its fruits, juices, etc.; much less could it be the origin of the animals. This is also true of fire: how is it possible that from fire there arises air, as fires manifest while burning? And so, "all things originate from the one" (A 7). Therefore, a single principle exists, which Diogenes called "infinite air", not in the sense of Anaximenes, but in that of Anaxagoras. Air "is gifted with great intelligence" (A 7); not only does it direct the cosmic and meteorological phenomena, but likewise animal life and man's psychic life.

W. Theiler[147] considered this innovation important in the history of Greek thought, in that the metaphysical principle is introduced into cosmic theology. It is true that Anaxagoras had first introduced the intelligence as efficient cause, but he did not reach the logical conclusions of this admission. Instead, Diogenes made the "intelligent air" the ordering principle of the universe. His thought was very popular in Athens, above all due to Socrates, who transformed the "intelligent air" into "Providence" and thus led to the conclusion of a principle in man analogous to the principle of the cosmos – the human soul.[148]

Archelaus of Athens was a disciple of Anaxagoras and Socrates' mentor. He took his strange theories on the origin of movement and of matter from Anaxagoras. For good reason Diogenes Laërtius called him "the naturalist, in that naturalistic philosophy ended with him" (Diogenes Laërtius, II, 4, 16). Moreover, he agreed with Anaxagoras in recognising a universal intelligence, but he gave man particular consideration when he stated, "Then men distinguished themselves from other animals; and they created leaders, laws, cities and other institutions". Moreover, he stated that "in all animals intellect likewise rests" (A 4).

Socrates also drew from Archelaus' thought, insofar as Archelaus had "an interest for ethical problems" (Diogenes Laërtius, *ibid.*).[149]

To conclude, the naturalistic schools, with these later exponents of a cosmogonic philosophy, either took refuge in repetitive formulas or began to consider man more than the cosmos. These are the two poles between which the Sophistic movement found itself. The study of the world's "arché" exhausted itself in monotonous revisions, while the political situation required a more urgent consideration of the "pólis". The figures of Empedocles and Alcmeon, who united medical praxis and philosophical doctrine, embodied an unstable balance which implied a choice: nature, or man.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SOPHISTIC MOVEMENT

1. *Introduction*

It is easy for us to state that the Sophists represent a crisis directed to the future because today we already know that this crisis led to the appearance of Athenian philosophy and wisdom's first flower, Socrates. However, when we attempt to enter into an analysis of the causes preceding and favouring this movement, the discussion quickly grows complicated, with great risks of following incorrect indications or of stopping at a partial vision of this important cultural phenomenon.

The very word "sophistés" did not originally indicate (as Plato later said) travelling salesmen of superficial and suspect culture.

The seven sages were called "sophists"; Pythagoras was a "sophist". In Aeschylus or Sophocles, in the first half of the fifth century B.C., the word indicated a musician or poet. Some time later, the word came to designate a new category of persons quite different from ancient rhapsodists. We have reached 450 B.C., when the men Plato would later attack began appearing in Athens: illusionists, imitators, jugglers and the like (*Sophistes* 233 ff.).

Aristotle, who lived in a time when these people had lost all credibility and had disappeared, attributes the word "sophists" to the Megarians and Antisthenians, as well as to eristics or those who are quarrelsome.[150] After Aristotle, the term regained the normal meaning Plato had given it, and so it remained through all Western tradition ("sophism", "sophistry", etc.). Hence Plato is called a Sophist by his enemies Isocrates and Lysia, as Aristotle is termed by the historian Timaeus. Eubulides is called a sophist by Epicurus, and Jesus is also called one by Lucian, the acid and versatile pagan writer of the second and third centuries after Christ.

Therefore, to speak of the Sophistic movement means to refer to the following elements: a) *in time*, the Sophists existed between 450 and about 380 B.C. They existed until shortly after Socrates' death, and hence the disciples of Socratic schools are not Sophists in the true sense; b) *in space* or origin, they are generally not Athenian. Gorgias came from Lentini in Sicily, Protagoras from Abdera, Prodicus (470?–400?) from Ceos an island in the Aegean Sea, Hippias from Elis (443–350?). After the four above-mentioned Sophists, the second generation spent a brief time in Athens, including Callicles, Thrasymachus, Antiphon, etc. These were disturbed and radical men who discredited their movement and led to its dissolution; c) *in the subjects*: one sometimes speaks of "Sophists" as if their leaders and representatives professed a system or made up a school. In reality, not only did they not leave disciples, but each taught different doctrines. This is why the Sophists are termed a "movement", in order to indicate a certain commonly critical attitude to institutions and a versatility in the human disciplines: linguistics, rhetoric, grammar, poetry and politics, mixed together with an educative impulse which were more form than content.

2. *Modern Interpretations of the Sophists and Critical Observations*

Before beginning an examination of the causes and doctrinal lines of the Sophists, it would be appropriate to consider the various attempts made by modern historians to propose a definition for the Sophistic movement. There are three fundamental theses: a) E. Zeller and his followers make them the discoverers of subjectivity and scholars of the person, messengers of relativity; b) W. Jäger considers them educators, bound to past educational tradition and hence valuable experts on the poets: Homer, Hesiod, Solon, Simonides and Pindar. Close to this interpretation are Joel (*Geschichte der Antike Philosophie*, Tübingen 1921) and T. Gomperz (*Sophistik und Rhetorik*, Leipzig, Berlin 1912), who understood the Sophists as practical educators, mentors for youth who were to enter politics. However, while Joel sees a certain continuity from preceding cosmological philosophy and Sophistic teachings, Gomperz underlines the literary aspect as the basis for the Sophists' action; c) A. Capizzi (*Protagora*, *Le testimonianze e i frammenti*, Florence 1978) was near Joel's thesis when he supports, in opposition to Jäger's humanistic thesis, the Sophists' philosophical value, insofar as they are substantially connected to the Eleatic school.[151]

Faced with these interpretations, we confront a dilemma: if the Sophists were educators, why do we discuss them in the context of a history of philosophy? If they were new philosophers, then why do we connect them with literary or cosmological tradition? To respond to this dilemma, we will proceed in an orderly fashion, first describing the Sophists' external causes (politics, religion, art). Then we will determine their interests or discussion themes and only then their goals. Hence we will also later determine their figure.

3. *Politics and the Sophists*

Historians generally admit that the Sophists were involved in Athenian politics.[152] Still, there is one problem: in what way politics made them philosophers. There are many opinions on this matter,[153] but there is no doubt that Athenian politics produced two essential effects for the philosophical tone favoured by the Sophists: a) an interest for the minute problems of democracy; b) the abandonment of metaphysics and cosmology.

Actually, we may partially speak of a social origin for the Sophistic movement. However, to reduce (as some do) the phenomenon to the passage from landed property to craftsmen's and commercial property is a judgement which makes politics derive from economy, according to Marxist criteria. In reality, it was Pericles' political reforms which provoked economic phenomena. He worked in four directions: a) *judicial indemnity* (3 mites daily for any citizen who showed himself to be a judge) and a raise in pay (one drachma to the members of the Council of Five Hundred or "Boulé"; 9 mites to soldiers). This reform attracted many peasants from the countryside. According to historians, at least 20,000 immigrants took advantage of this reform. On the other hand, Athens (which had an annual revenue payment of 700 talents) had to tax their allies and (in a very grave gesture) removed the fiscal funds of 31 allied cities, from the sacred island of Delos to Athens, for imperialistic reasons; b) *the loss of authority* of the Areopagus, the city's ancient Senate, to which were solely reserved trials, or crimes of blood and sacrilege. In this fashion, legislative functions passed over to the executive sphere, and the contentious switched to the "Boulè", or Parliament, a popular organ which quickly supported a democratic government and the promotion of the proletariat to the aristocracy; c) *the rotation of appointments*, whereby the nobles lost the privelege of being "archontes", their military (stràtegist), financial and political responsibilities. Without any previous political clarifications, the highest functions passed into the hands of the lowest classes, with struggles between the nobility and the plebians; d) public works (the Parthenon, which cost 1500 talents), the temple of Athena Nike, the Herekteum, the Propylaei, the walls at Piraeus, etc., which exalted the peoples' fantasies and ambitions. A new man was born, no longer the "noble" ("kalós"), but the "capable" (agathós); not with moral seriousness, but with daring career ambitions. The Athenian democracy, which ruled at the time of the Thirty Years' War (432–404) and involved Pericles himself (who was exonerated in 430, before his death), finished with the devouring of finances and a terminal break between social classes which led to a catastrophic situation.[154]

Therefore, politics were the cause and effect of Sophism. The break between the nobles and the lower classes, between free institutions and natural order, gave the Sophists an opportunity not only to teach the boorish improvised judges of Athens, but also to approach both social poles: order ("nómos") and force ("physis"). It was necessary to give the newly arrived a rapid but superficial lesson on all the problems of democracy and to proclaim either that justice comes from ancient legality (as Thrasymachus claimed when he exalted the "pátrios politeía" against democratic reforms of the "nómos") or that there is an impassable division between the two poles (as Antiphon and Hippias taught when they contrasted the "just by nature" and the "just by convention" (díkaion physei", "díkaion nómoi"). The "physis" is force, instinct and power; the "nómos" is weakness and cowardice; power creates law (Gorgias 484 B 1). The "nómos tês physeos", a dialectical symbiosis of the two terms, becomes a Nietzschian ideal, as Critias held.

The Sophists also justify this opposition in the myth of Prometheus (*Protagoras*, 320 ff.). Two civilisations exist: the static sacred civilisation founded on the "aidós", protected by Zeus and the civilisation of astuteness (Prometheus) founded on the "dike", which is complete and perfect. Hence society is not a natural institution, but a pact ("synthéke", as Lycophron stated). Consequently, evil derives from laws.[155]

4. *Religion, Tragic Art and Poetic Experience*

With the Sophists' arrival, religion lost its ancient function as a stimulus for philosophy; it became the object of criticism and even disregard. This is not because the first-generation Sophists were atheists, but because they were interpreting the general confusion which reigned[156] due to various factors: religion became an "instrumentum regni" (after Pericles transferred the treasury of the Greek-Athenian alliance from Delos to Athens); peasant religiosity, which was still bound to Orphic rites, was an indirect indictment of the worn-out ritualism and old formulas of official worship; individual devotions entered the city (Asclepius, "Zeus phìlos") which contrasted with public worship.

Various pretexts were used to stem the decadence with the famous "asébeia" trials, which were held against Anaxagoras, Protagoras, Prodicus, Alcibiades and even Socrates.[157] However, the Atomists had already ridiculed religion to a sociological custom and some psychological factors.

The first-generation Sophists were inclined to agnosticism. Protagoras said: "I am not able to experience the gods' existence or nonexistence, nor can I conclude what their essence is in relation to their exterior manifestations. In fact, there are many factors which impede such an experience: not only their sensible impossibility, but also life's brevity".[158] (B 4).

Prodicus of Ceos believed in psychological explanations: the ancient considered to be gods the waters of rivers, the sun, the moon and all natural forces. Water is identified divine with Poseidonius, fire with Ephestus, wine with Bacchus, etc. In short, the gods are the things useful to man's life, which are then made divine (quoted by Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus Math.* IX, 18; B 5).

Antiphon, who belonged to the second generation, said that the gods are not reality ("blastémata"), but human institutions ("nomothémata"). Trasimachus rudely stated, "The gods do not take care of men" (B 8). Even worse is Critias' sociological solution, when in his *Sysyphos* (B 25) he states that the primitives gathered in societies and began to promulgate laws and found institutions. However, crimes (especially unknown crimes) endangered the social groups. So an able and astute head of State followed and established religion and gave his invented gods the power to infringe on man's secret thoughts and actions. Providence was invented, national gods created; and in this way injustice ceased and religion directed history. Therefore, there are two effects of religion's fall: the withering of the metaphysical problem of the world's existence (and end of cosmological investigations), and man's bewilderment when faced with the problems of existence and death. If politics exhausted individualism, then the crisis of religion provoked metaphysical uncertainty. Man is alone, before the world, the gods and society. All that remains is monotonous daily life with its insignificant problems, without any grandiose or supernatural goals.

The Sophists take on this frame of mind not to point man toward the transcendent, but to push him even further down into the flux of things. They succeeded in this by teaching that all human life is ambiguous and dominated by contrary and irrational forces (“physis”, “nomos”). The important thing is that, given the alternatives (“dissòi lógoi”) or possible choices, man knows how to decide by using “better reasons” (“kreîtton lógos”) (A 21), choosing what seems most plausible as the occasion demands (“kairós”). The Sophists’ ability to teach existential casuistry was modeled on epic literature and tragedies[159] and was thus transformed into education; but this was not education in the moral sense, but in the sense of a dexterity without scruples. The ill man, they said, considers his sensations “true”, even when the best wine tastes acidic. He believes something to be acidic when it is of the highest quality. His sensation is “true”, in that it is in accordance with the situation. However, medicine can cure this state of illness. Therefore, the normal man does not have a “true” sensation or perception, but only a “better” one. The goal of Sophistic philosophy is similar to that of medicine, to make “better” what does not appear true and good.

However, a verbal technique is imposed for this task of demonstration. The technique consists of the capacity to persuade someone of the better things through five hierarchies of human values: in the perfection of language (“orthoepía”), in the practical exercise of civic education, in the teaching of politics (“aretè politiké” – hence the Sophistic principle of the ability to teach “political virtue”), and in the capacity to persuade. The man “educated” by the Sophists is capable of creating better situations for himself (“tòn étto lógon kreîtto poiên”), a fact summarised in Protagoras’ principle, “Man is the measure of all things”.

Gorgias added that if this "better reason were not found", then it sufficed to perceive the right moment ("kairós"); the rhetorical arts teach men to overcome the concrete antitheses of life ("psychagogia"). Antiphon proposes a different method when he perceives a fatal law in the contrasts of everyday life ("homónoia"), in which all the contraries between the "nomos" and the "physis" are reconciled.

5. *Object and Theme of the Sophistic Movement*

Up to this point, we have described the *external or social causes* for the rise of the so-called Sophistic vocation. Now we must enter into the heart of this vocation and discover its object. The object is twofold: *indirectly*, the Sophists' objective is encyclopedic. The Sophist could teach "political virtue" if he were versed in all the problems of the Athenian democratic man who had become a judge, strategist, politician, etc. He had to know all the problems, from heaven to earth, from gods to man, from politics to naval technology, military strategy, legislation, mythology, etc. For example, we know that Hippias was an orator, grammarian, physical scientist, and even a tailor and cobbler.

Directly, in more depth, the Sophists' objective was the rhetorical art in its worst sense – the capacity to convince. In fact, there are two kinds of rhetoric: one is to "say well" ("eû légein"), and the other to "say correctly" ("orthôs légein"). The first consists of a system of rules for parade oratory, as a motion of the sentiments and a formal set of norms for an elegant discourse. The second is "speculative",[160] especially in Gorgias and Protagoras, because it discusses the natural character of language (Heraclitus) and concludes by considering it conventional. Hence the metaphysical and logical questions of language are suspended (the Eleatic succession of being-thinking-saying!), and the problem is limited to a consideration of *language as something pronounced, not language as a word.* Logic is reduced to orthoepy, etymology, lexicography, grammar and social communication.[161]

The human discourse no longer regards whether one "knows something" (as some later Atomists had already stated) (Diels B 70 – "We do not know if anything exists", Metrodorus of Chios had stated, thus eliminating the cosmological problem). Here the thought goes even further: "We do not know of knowledge" (negating the gnoseological problem). Still, the problem remains of words as instruments of persuasion, social gluten, vehicles of emotion (cfr. Gorgias' *Eulogy to Helen*, Prodicus' *Hercules at the Crossroads* and Protagoras' *The Involuntary Killing in the Javelin Throw*).[162]

The heterogeneous relation between word and thing and between the word and what is pronounced (cfr. Plato's *Cratylus*, 384 d) produced an uncrossable abyss between human discourse ("there is no natural name for anything" – *Cratylus*, 384 d). The words spoken by men are reduced to a conventional skirmish ("hortótes") which brings to light the various objective situations faced by the interlocutors. Technically, the Sophists called these situations "dissòi lógoi", which no longer reflect a common search for truth, but anguish, disputes[163] and verbal illusions.

6. *The Goal of Sophists and the Philosophical Mission*

To conclude this investigation of the Sophistic figure, it is necessary to confront another subject: the goal, or intention, of Sophistic activity. Riches were certainly one of the Sophists' goals, and Plato's accusation of "unscrupulous trade" is doubtless true; but this does not seem to reflect their central core or their primary intention. Others (such as Levi in various studies, Jäger in *Paideia*, and Nestle) find the Sophists' primary goal in the teaching of "political virtue", a quick preparation of the "novi homines" for the works of democracy.[164] This thesis could be explained as follows: the Sophists' goal was guided by their phenomenic theory on words' emotive value;[165] therefore, their rhetoric tends to produce states of mind, emotive experiences which give rise to oratory abilities and a certain equilibrium of character. Prometheus' myth can be taken as a paradigm, not only because it is so dear to the Sophists, but also because it is an ideal of education. Civil life is possible only because the titan taught it to the first primitive men. Suggestion ("psychagogía") is thus the hidden goal, which serves as almost a divine instrument to teach "political virtue".[166] Another example dear to the Sophists, that of Hercules at the crossroads, was not presented by Prodicus as an opposition between Areté and Kakía, but as two roads which can both be taken for personal gain. Utilitarianism and hedonism rest at the conclusion of the two discourses signified by the two symbolic damsels.[167]

Based on the above considerations, we may attempt to define the Sophist. First of all, working from the peripheral circles of preceding philosophy, they are original thinkers, but not illuminists (in a certain sense, were Xenophanes and Anaxagoras not illuminists?), nor encyclopaedists (Democritus fits this description much better), nor educators (Pythagoras and Empedocles were educators). They were "philosophers of the new social [democratic] experience" in Athens, which lasted from 450 to about 380; and they eliminated the cosmological considerations of the naturalists (including the later Atomists) in favour of humanism as it arose from a consideration of language, law, morals and religion. As Carlo Mazzantini states, the change of research interests implies a metaphysical prerequisite[168] in that they placed man at the centre of daily interests, sometimes elevating him to the dignity of "measure" (Protagoras' "métron"), other times considering him in a given situation (Gorgias' "kairós") and giving him the energy to extricate himself from that situation.

To conclude our definition of the above four aspects, we would say that the Sophistic movement is a totality of humanistic philosophies (the form), which arose in an Athenian social and political environment where a tragic and ambiguous sense of life existed (the origin, or efficient cause), having the goal of *teaching "political virtue"* (end, or final cause) through rhetoric (material cause, or object). Therefore, the Sophists are not philosophers because they engaged in rhetoric (with Isocrates, rhetorics decayed into a system of formal precepts), nor were they philosophers because they taught the "areté politiké". The educative moment is the effect of a philosophical conception, and the conception is the ability to teach that same virtue.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOME IMPORTANT SOPHISTS

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1. *Protagoras*

An articulate exposition of the principles and causes of the Sophistic movement permits us to engage in a brief presentation of some representative personages, who have already been mentioned throughout the introductory notes supplied above.

Protagoras (485–410?) was, according to Diogenes Laërtius, the first to introduce "sophisms" (IX, 8, 52) and to use the "dissòi lógoi" (*ibid.*, 51) and contradiction (*ibid.*, 53). It is doubtful that his mentor was Democritus, who was a citizen of the same land. Therefore, V. E. Alfieri excludes the possibility that Protagoras be numbered among the disciples of the school of Abdera.[169] He travelled to Athens and was accepted into Pericles' circle, and the latter gave Protagoras the job of revising the constitution for the pan-Hellenic colony of Thurii in Calabria. He travelled to Sicily, but upon his return to Athens was accused of "asébeia" and "his books were burned in the market square" (Diogenes Laërtius, *ibid.*, 52).

He wrote many works; of the twelve mentioned by Diogenes Laërtius, the most important was entitled *Antilogies* (Contradictions), and included a part dedicated to the gods (agnosticism), a second part which discussed being (critique of Eleatism through arguments pro and con), a third part which studied politics and law (theory of the two original forms of state: one natural, and one civil or conventional), and a fourth part which considered arts as opposed to mathematics and athletics.

Another work not found on Laërtius' list was entitled *Truth*. However, some disagreements concerning his philosophy have recently arisen. Kurt von Fritz (*Protagoras*, REA XXIII, 1957, pp. 908–921) held that the antithesis between Parmenides, Heraclitus, Anaxagoras, Leucippus and Zeno could have been reconciled through social understanding, intended as the dominion of common opinions. This is what Protagoras purportedly accomplished through a satire of ancient paradoxes. Antonio Capizzi (*I Sofisti*, Florence 1978), as we mentioned above, believed that Protagoras' philosophy was the most important moment in the history of Eleatic problems. Hence Protagoras' thought would be considered speculative and cosmological, completely outside the so-called Sophistic humanism. This latter thesis was rejected by Gabriele Giannantoni ("Il frammento 1 di Protagora in una testimonianza platonica", in *Rivista critica di Storia della filosofia*, XV, 1960, pp. 227–237); according to him, Protagoras ridiculed the pomp of Eleatic philosophy.[170]

Leaving aside these discussion, Protagoras' philosophy contains a *negative or destructive part*, in which the Sophist states that religion, metaphysics, ethics and even science and art do not possess objective certainty, but pertain to individuals' subjective opinions. Opinions can be reduced to the "dissói lógoi", which are in opposition. As Seneca stated: "in omni re in utrumque partem disputari posse ex aequo" (*Epist*, 88, 43 Diels A 20).[171]

The reconstructive or phenomenic part regards Protagoras' phenomenistic theory of reality. The world is not the "physis" of the ancients, but individual history, made up of small fragments of situations ("chrémata"). Only man can perceive their fleeting manifestations. This is man's useful ("chrêma") and practical ("prâgma") world. The "dissòs lógos" is but the higher level of this inferior and flowing world ("rheusté"). ". . . So that matter, as much as it depends on its essence, is everything it reveals to everyone" (Sextus Empiricus, *Pirr*. I, 216–218).

The positive part: three levels of experience exist: the lower one ("chrémata"), the higher one of the "dissòs lógos", and on the third level human dominion is introduced. This dominion consists of creating the "kreîtton lógon", the ability to overcome the lesser knowledge of experience ("chrêma") with greater practical possibilities. This is the sense we give to the famous principle of man as "métron": "pànton chremàton métron ánthropos". Note that Protagoras' man is not universal man, as Hegel, Zeller, Gomperz, Natorp, Levi, Banfi and others opined, but concrete and individual man, as Plato (*Theaetetus*, 152) and Aristotle (*Metaphysics* 1062 b 12) stated.

2. *Gorgias (485–374 B.C.)*

He came to Athens from Lentini as an ambassador to create an alliance against Syracuse. He later took up residence in Greece, where he was welcomed in Thessalia, Delphi, Olympus, etc. He lived to the age of 107, thanks to his good living habits; during his lifetime he taught rhetoric. He had many disciples and admirers, including Socrates, Critias, Alcibiades, Thuycidides, Aeschines, etc. We possess many titles of his works, including *Eulogy to Helen*, *Palamedes*, *Olympian Discourse*, *Oratory Art*, *On Non-Being, or On Nature*, etc. He inaugurated a Greek writing style: florid, hot, persuasive and fine. His *negative philosophy* consists of a reasoned refutation of Eleatic metaphysics. In a notable fragment from *On Non-Being*, he proposes a tragic closure of thought faced with reality, creating the premises for the nihilism embodied in second-generation Sophists.[172] It will suffice to compare the metaphysics of Parmenides and Gorgias:

PARMENIDES	GORGIAS
Being is; non-being is not	Nothing exists
Being can be thought, because being and thinking are the same	Even if being were to exist, it could not be thought
The being which is thought can be expressed	Even if one could think the being (or if it were revealed by the gods), it could not be communicated to others

Gorgias' *positive philosophy* can be gleaned from a long quote we have from the *Eulogy to Helen*. Gorgias, having destroyed being, thought and the word, takes refuge in the spoken word as a conventional, fleeting sound. The effect of this fleeting element is not truth or error, but persuasion or deception ("peithó", "apáte").

The word has its categories: as *poetry* it "gives rise to a regret which soothes pain"; as a *hot and fascinating sound*, it is power ("dynamis"); as *magic*, it captures the soul with its spell ["goetéia"] or with its necessity ["ananke"]. The totality is "psychagogia", an enchantment of the spirit.

Therefore, a philosophy underneath these rhetorical precepts exists: poetry, fascination and magic are conditions of the speaking subject and of the listener. The Sophist speaker must take advantage of the right moment, the "kaírós", to persuade or deceive.[173] We possess fragments which exemplify this theory of affective communication, the *Discourse on Palamedes*: Palamedes defends himself from Ulixes, who had accused the former of having consorted with barbarians. Palamedes (Gorgias says) could not have betrayed Ulixes even if he had wished to do so; and he would not have wanted to do so had he been able to do so. Also, in a fragment from *Epitaph*: those who died for the homeland are not exponents of a moral principle. They are dead because, in the moment of sacrifice, they believed that they could not act otherwise. Ethical value does not previously exist as an ideal paradigm, but is realised and made history throughout chance. The value and the event coincide, and hence we have a situation ethics.

Lycophron and Alcidamantes, two of Gorgias' Sophistic disciples, supported a political theory where the State, in order to be strong, must defend itself from criminals in order to favour public morality.

However, we should bring to mind two other first-generation Sophists: Prodicus of Ceos (470–400?), author of the *Hours*, in which we find the famous myth of Hercules at the crossroads later recounted by Xenophon (*Memorabilia* II, 1). Prodicus extols the dignity of work and states that religion was established by those who first discovered natural forces. He taught the theory of language as a natural institution (hence the etymological problem) and as a conventional technique with a play of distinctions (hence the research of synonyms). Virtue, for him, could not be taught.

Hippias of Elis (443 – 350?), was an encyclopaedic and cosmopolitan man who based his anti-idealistic philosophy on the concept of cosmic sympathy. Plato called him "good and wise" (*Hippias maior* 281 a). He was gifted with a tremendous memory and could repeat, in order, the names of fifty people of whom he had heard. He developed a psychological theory on memory ("tò mnemonikòn téchnema").

After having described these four major philosophers, a large group of intriguers, anarchists and radicals still remains. One of these was Antiphon, who based his philosophy on the struggle between opposites. He interpreted dreams not as divine messages, but as normal psychic events. He taught that life cannot be "brought together like cards", because everything in nature is irreversible.

After Antiphon came Callicles, Thrasimachus (the insolent participant in the first book of Plato's *Republic*), Xeniad, etc. This philosophical era came to a close when Socrates built a new philosophy on the ruins of Sophism's later disciples.

PART III

THIRD PERIOD
ATHENIAN METAPHYSICS

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CHAPTER ONE

SOCRATES AND HIS HISTORICAL PROBLEMS

1. *From the Sophists to Socrates*

Socrates began a new period of the history of ancient philosophy. This period (since the times of Hellenism, as we see in Diogenes Laërtius, III, 56) is considered the qualitative leap from a cosmological to an ethical-humanistic conception. In reality, as we indicated in paragraph Part III. Ch 2, n. 1, Socrates represents more a reaction to the Sophistic movement than to physical philosophy. He reconsidered the Eleatic progression, which had tragically been negated by Gorgias and re-created *the progression from the sound to the word and from the word to the concept*. Plato and Aristotle later gave metaphysical value to the Socratic concept, which they based, respectively, in the "idea" and in the "ousia".

Therefore, Socrates' contribution to philosophy's reconsideration is limited; but, seen in retrospect, his thought belongs to the metaphysical reawakening of the first Athenian school. In the spiraling movement from the Socratic concept to the Platonic idea and the Aristotelian substance, Parmenides' great line of thought is recovered: being, thinking, saying. I call this a spiraling movement, because Parmenides' point of departure, being, is Athenian metaphysics' point of arrival.

Many of Plato's testimonials show that Socrates returned to the thread of philosophy and guided it from the spoken sound to the word and the concept. A few examples will suffice.

"This *discourse* ['logos'] imprints as on a mirror or on a liquid surface the entire vision in the flux of the *word* which leaves the lips" (*Theaetetus*, 206, d). Also, "at this moment you and I have only the *name* in common with the Sophist; the *truth of fact*, according to which each person *gives it a name*, is reduced to a notion which each holds individually, a *personal notion*. Instead, there is a need to agree in every case on the fact itself by means of a reasoned definition, rather than agreeing *on the name*" (*Sophistes*, 218, c). Another quote: "When one seeks to isolate every individual idea from what it contains, one ends up completely eliminating *the word*" (*Sophistes*, 259 e). In fact, to allow us to be deprived of the *word*, "of *such an instrument*, would bring irreparable harm, and we would be lacking in philosophy" (*Ibid.*, 260, a) Moreover, in *Epist. VII* 342 b ff., we see that philosophy's point of departure "is the *name*, then the definition, then the figure and its image in the fantasy, then the science of this object of the fantasy, and finally order and the ideal being".

Therefore, there is no doubt that Socrates' point of departure is the name, or the spoken sound, which was the residual matter left intact by the Sophists' anti-metaphysical critique. As Klaus Öhler states, it should not be surprising that Plato followed his mentor's method, given that Plato was not certain of his dialectics until he travelled his mentor's road.[174]

2. *Life and Death of Socrates*

He was born in 469 B.C. near Athens (which was then at its apex, with over 200,000 inhabitants), about a half hour from the ancient walls. His father Sophroniscus was a sculptor and his mother Phenarete a midwife.

It seems his family was well off, and he received a good education, following the program Ephialtes had imposed in 461 while he was city magistrate: gymnastics, music, poetry. He undoubtedly learned how to sculpt from his father. During his adolescence, he studied with the most famous philosophers, above all Prodicus and

Archelaus, Anaxagoras' brilliant disciple who wished to take Socrates with him to Samos. He was a faithful soldier in the frequent wars of this period: in 449 he fought in Eleusis in the victorious battle against the Peleponnesians.

In the years 449–432 (the beginning of the Thirty Years' War) Socrates dedicated himself to family life, having married the difficult Xantippes, who bore him three children. Still, he attracted political debates. In 429 he was invited as a soldier to Potideas, where he saved the life of Alcibiades (one of Athen's most brilliant and well-known strategists). In 424 (as we read in Plato's *Charmides*) he escaped with 8,000 other soldiers when the Peleponnesians advanced on the city. The following year he again found himself warring, this time in Amphipolis. The so-called Nician peace of 421 gave him the opportunity to return to the city and take better care of his family and his political aspirations. He was elected member of the pritany,[175] a commission of the "Boulé" or 500-member State Tribunal. As a member of this commission, he defended the admirals of the Athenian fleet, who scored a victory in the Arginusian isles. Nonetheless, this victory came only with large loss of life. Still, he participated in political life not because of passion, but because of his love for truth. At that time, the atmosphere of Athens was such that a single gesture or word was taken as a partisan declaration.

During the brief rule of the Thirty Tyrants, led by Critias (404–403), Socrates did not involve or compromise himself in politics, although he was asked to be active. After that tyranny fell and the Government of 300 (led by Theramenes) took over, he was brought up on charges before the "Boulé". His three accusers were the merchant Anitus, the poet Meletus and the orator Lycon. However, the accuser's libelous statements were edited by a certain Polycrates, who provoked (as we shall see) the indignation of honest men and Socrates' friends. There were three accusations: corruption of youth, impiety (the famous "asébeia" that victimised various philosophers), and the introduction of new divinities. The trial was organised and carried out on irrelevant pretexts and charges. Socrates waived the defence of his office, since he did not wish to defend himself, but only to proclaim his dedication and faithfulness to his homeland. After the first judgement (with a negative result: 281 against, 220 for) he courageously restated not only his innocence, but also petitioned for recompense. The result was disastrous since it irritated the justices, who voted 368 to 141 for the death penalty.

The execution was not carried out immediately because the law prohibited administration of the death penalty until the sacred ship, which sailed to Delus every year for a propitiatory rite, returned to port. During his last month in prison, Socrates was visited by his disciples, who even tried to convince him to escape from prison (as we read in the dialogue *Crito*). Not only did Socrates reject this proposition, which to him seemed a betrayal more than cowardice, but he remained in prison and serenely discussed the sense of life and death (*Phaedo*). He died after drinking hemlock, which was the method imposed on him by his jailers. It was 399. The Athenians (as we read in Diogenes Laërtius, II, 5, 43) were remorseful for this injustice: "they closed the sporting centers and the gymnasia. The others they exiled, Meletus they sentenced to death; and they honoured Socrates with a bronze statue, which they placed in the Pompaeum (procession hall); the sculptor of this statue was Lysippus".

3. *The Socratic Question*

Since Socrates did not write any works, historians have an insoluble problem when confronted by some unarguable facts. It seems that the first author to pose the Socratic question was A. Stapper in 1786 (*De philosophia Socratis*). This led to a tremendous variety of solutions offered throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The "Socratic question" is posed, above all, *for a first*, *external reason*: the figure of Socrates himself and his so-called "atopia" or strangeness, which seems incredible. He was subjected to ecstatic phenomena (for example, when he stood stock-still, absorbed in

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his thoughts, for 24 hours in the same place, without noticing what was going on around him. This supposedly took place in Potidea, as we read in Plato's *Symposium*, 220 c). In battle he was "noble" and capable of tolerating extreme heat and cold while resisting thirst. The Syrian fortune-teller Zopirus noted that he had the physiognomy of a sensual man, yet Socrates (to those who remonstrated with him) responded that although that was true, he had succeeded in dominating himself. He responded with a disarming and subtle irony to the barbs of comedians and commoners and to Xantippe's insults. He rejected the Sophists' purple, wearing a coarse cloak instead.

This moral equilibrium disturbed the Greek mentality, which connected moral elevation to physical beauty. Socrates was not exactly the type to fit this concept: taurine eyes, swollen lips, pug-nose. In short, he was a clumsy and repulsive man, even if he was strong and robust of physique.[176] As one modern author claimed, Socrates was the least Greek among all Greek philosophers, although he was Athenian.[177]

Another motive, external but still significant, regards the flowering of philosophical schools after the philosopher's death. What surprises us is the varied orientation, even opposition, of the various schools. The Cyrenaics proposed the wildest form of Hedonism; the Cynics proposed forbidding and anti-intellectual morals; the Megarians' thought resembles some old Eleatic theses. Yet Plato makes Socrates a hero and a master of metaphysical philosophy. How do we explain this wide variety of philosophies inspired by one teacher?

A *third fundamental motive* exists regarding the sources, or the writings which directly or indirectly consider Socrates' figure and teaching. Naturally, we refer to the ancient sources, which are usually divided into the major and minor ones, in reference to their volume or newsworthiness. The major works are those of Aristophanes, the great Athenian comic artist and Socrates' contemporary (450–359), Plato (428–348), Xenophon (430–358) and Aristotle (385–322).[178]

Among the minor sources are Isocrates, Aeschines, Antisthenes, and later Plutarch (who wrote *De genio Socratis*), Apuleius (*De deo Socratis*), and so forth. The question is simple. The major sources propose four "types" of Socrates: illuminist-Sophist (Aristophanes), metaphysical scholar (Plato), a spiritual guide (not a philosopher – Xenophon), and a moralist (but not a metaphysical researcher – Aristotle). The minor sources are even more confusing. This situation apparently makes a reconstruction of the original Socrates "desperate" because it is believed that the sources are either polluted or partisan. Recent nineteenth- and twentieth-century studies, with their pompous and unclear historical critique, have only made the problem seemingly unresolvable. Hence the dilemma: either we give precedence to one source over another and thus risk being unilateral, or we take recourse to eclecticism with all its risks of oversimplification. In reality, the "Socratic question" is somewhat artificial: despite the sources, this question does not arise for later philosophers (such as Arcesilaus or Pyrrho), or even for political figures close to Socrates, such as Theramenes. Why, then, should we ask this question about Socrates, when all the sources are substantially in agreement on a few essential facts and when the remaining problems are common to all attempts at historical reconstruction?[179]

4. *Brief Analysis of the Sources*

While awaiting further progress in the studies of customs and morals in Socrates' time,[180] we can still examine some sources and evaluate them, in order to better reconstruct the original Socrates.

We begin with *Aristophanes*, whose Socrates was favourably accepted by Burnet, Taylor, Jäger, Mondolfo, Tovar, Chevalier, Strauss and Adorno (*Introduzione a Socrate*, Milan 1970). There were other earlier scholars who also supported Aristophanes' description, such as R. Pöhlmann (*Sokrates und seine Volk*, Munich, Leipzig, 1899) and H. Böck (*Der unverfälschte Sokrates*, Innsbruck, 1903).

The comic artist wrote *Clouds* in 423, and it was shown in that same year with little success; it contained a caricature of Socrates, making the latter an illuminist, skeptic and Sophist (as was Prodicus). Hence there were two types of man in one figure: the Socrates who from his "thought-room" ("phrontistérion")[181] measured the flea's jump with wax and studied the humming of the mosquito. There are scenes where scholars scrutinise the earth . . . and heaven; Strepsiades sits on a bed infested with bedbugs and invokes the goddesses of the clouds, who give him a lesson on the vortex. Strepsiades is struck by his Sophist-educated son. Aristophanes also found pretexts to attack Socrates in his *Birds* and *The Frogs*. Around that time (or soon after), other comedians also delighted in skewering Socrates: Amípsia in *Konnos* and in 421 Eupoles in *Adulators* depict him as a babbler who worries about everything except about getting himself something to eat.

What should we think of this Socrates? Until a short time ago, historians (beginning with Hegel, who divided Socrates' life into three periods: a) materialistic period; b) spiritualistic period; and c) Socrates assimilated by Plato, assumed a hypothetical conversion of Socrates when he was about 40 years of age. This was professed by Wolff in 1811, when in his edition of *Clouds* he held that in his youth Socrates was a Sceptic, and that Aristophanes' formulation refers to this period. Later, Socrates was supposedly "converted". A second solution was offered by E. Maier:[182] Aristophanes was not touching on Socrates personally, but only on the two categories of personages then influential in Athens: naturalists and Sophists. Hence Aristophanes gathered together for the common folk two types of persons worthy of mockery, as would be done in Italy with Pulcinella and Doctor Balanzone.[183]

Recently, a third hypothesis has been proposed by F. Sarri.[184] Without a doubt, in his *Clouds* Aristophanes followed the rules of ancient comedy, in that he used certain categories of personages who were inauspicious to the young. Nevertheless, in verse 94 ("psychôn sophôn toût' esti phrontistérion") the mention of the soul in connection to the "phrontistérion" would mean that Aristophanes did not understand the meaning of "soul" as the object of study for a religious community ("phrontistérion"), nor did he understand Socrates' method. However, he did understand the difference between Socrates and the Sophists. It was not relevant for Aristophanes that both Socrates and the Sophists received money from their families, but he understood that Socrates' goal was "to purify the soul of the interlocutor".[185]

This partly justifies the second thesis and is confirmed by the fact that Socrates supposedly learned from Archelaus (and later developed in the anthropological sense) the revolutionary principle of "care of the soul" as philosophy's goal. In my opinion, this attempt merits our attention.

Xenophon: It is interesting to note that chronologically the four major sources are each 30 years apart. After Aristophanes, Plato wrote around 398, and Xenophon intervened with his *Memorabilia* around 370. Why this length of time? In general, historians agree that Xenophon's work belongs to the literary style named "lógoi sokratikoí" mentioned by Diogenes Laërtius (II, 7, 60–61, 64). There supposedly were many of these works (according to Panaetius) but only four authentic ones: those of Plato (Apology), Xenophon (Memorabilia), Antisthenes (lost) and Aeschines (also lost). The others (such as those of Euclid the Megarian and of Phaedo) were spurious.

These were point-by-point refutations of the defamations which Polycrates had written and spread about Socrates' trial in 399; in this way the real Socrates was to be presented.

However, this does not simplify our judgement of Xenophon's work: he encountered Socrates at the age of 25 and knew him for no more than two years, because he later offered his military services to the Spartan king Agesilaus, travelling with him to Asia for Cyrus the Young's unfortunate expedition. In his work Cyropaedia Xenophon describes the retreat of 10,000 Greeks after their defeat near the Pontus Euxinus or the Black Sea in 401. When

Xenophon returned to Greece late, Socrates was probably already dead, so he returned to his farm in Seyllon to write his memoirs. The fact that it was 370 when he decided to jot his memoirs on Socrates is explained by the fact that the aristocratic and brilliant cavalier was not pleased by Antisthenes' (son of a Thracian mother) defence of Socrates in Athens in 399, nor by that of Euclid (written in Megara around 398), nor by those composed by Aeschines and Plato. It seems that Socrates' "transfiguration" at the hands of Plato was too exaggerated for his tastes.

To sum up, he wrote four works dedicated to Socrates: *Symposium* the *Oeconomic*, an *Apology*, and the *Memorabilia*,[186] and these he wrote with a twofold intention. One goal was polemical, against Polycrates, while the other was to clarify things in relation to the various "logoi" which had been written in the previous thirty years. It should also be observed that of Xenophon's four works, only the *Memorabilia* has an expressly biographical intention. As Maier observes, the *Symposium* seems to propose a Socratic "eros" of a cynical type.[187] The *Apology* is not significant. However, the *Memorabilia* presents a Socrates much different from Plato's. So, the question returns: do we accept only Xenophon, or also Xenophon?

Many scholars have pronounced their preference for the Socrates sketched by Xenophon, but even these opinions have a variety of shadings. E. Boutroux, Antonio Labriola (*Socrate*, Bari 1909), A. Döring (1895) and Gomperz all stated that the original Socrates is described in the *Memorabilia* —but only in the part where the cynic and the spiritualist are enhanced. H. Maier,[188] Hermann Croust[189] and others share a different opinion, saying that only the first two chapters of the *Memorabilia*[190] are credible.

In our opinion, taking into consideration G. Zuccante's balanced criteria,[191] we may state that: a) personally, Xenophon did not completely knew Socrates; b) his memoirs were parenetical; c) he drew from Plato, as likewise from Antisthenian and Cyrenaic sources (for example, the declared aversion to natural research); d) nevertheless, when he agrees with Plato and distances himself from Antisthenes, Xenophon is a good historical source. There are three points of convergence: morals, aesthetics and dialectics.

In morals, Xenophon's Socrates is anti-Hedonist; he taught that pleasures take away the use of the reason. Moreover—in agreement with Plato—for Socrates, "wisdom is a virtue . . . there were not two different things, but he thought that whoever knew the beautiful and the good, also practises it" (*Memorabilia* III, 9), and that justice itself is a wisdom ("epistéme"). In fact, it is better to be a liar voluntarily than involuntarily (cfr. the *Euthydemus* and *Hippias Major*). Thus there is a certain similarity between the relation of "eupraxia" and "eutychia" of Memorabilia III, 9 and 14, and *Euthydemus*, 278 e ff. On the other hand, Xenophon's claim that Socrates exalted the "enkrateia" has a cynical flavour.

Aesthetics: In Xenophon we read two of Socrates' colloquies on beauty; one with the painter Parrhasius, the sculptor Cliton (*Memorabilia* III, 1) and Pistias the armourer. The second colloquy was with the courtesan Theodotes (III, 11). However, the latter is shabby compared with the well-known discourse in the *Symposium* of the priestess Diothyma.

Dialogue or dialectics: Socrates often states that "those who know well what something is in itself [ti hékaston eie tôn ònton] are also capable of explaining it to others." (IV, 6) Therefore, he required that sages "reason on things according to their species" ("*dialégontas* katà gene tà prágmata") (IV, 5), and that the best become "strong in discussion" ("dialégesthai dynatotátous") and capable of "reasoning according to concepts" ("dialégesthai katà tà géne"). In a word, they had to be "excellent in dialectics" (101–102 – "dialektikótatoi"). This is in agreement with what we read in the Platonic dialogues *Politicus*, *Sophistes* and *Phaedrus*.

Conclusion: we find three aspects in Xenophon's Socrates: an anti-Hedonistic and intellectual ethics, an aesthetics he just lightly outlined, and a dialectics of concepts. Here we can apply the hermeneutic principle of G. Zuccante: "To complete Xenophanes through Plato, and to temper Plato through Xenophon . . . ; taking recourse in Aristotle when the goal is to define well the respective parts of Xenophanes and Plato".[192]

Aristotle: Aristotle, although he was born fifteen years after Socrates' death, could have become acquainted with the latter in Athens (where he lived at 17 years, from 367 on) through eyewitnesses, in the context of the struggle between the four Socratic schools: Megarians, Cynics, Cyrenaics and Platonists. A popular tradition also existed, that of the "lógoi sokratikói"; Aristotle was able to approach Socratics who did not belong to any school.[193] All this does not make Aristotle a primary source,[194] although we can entrust ourselves to him on two subjects: morals and studies of dialogue.

Regarding morals, he confirms the intellectualism already noted by Xenophon and Plato. "Socrates held that all the virtues are rational activities ['logous'] insofar as they are sciences ['epistémas']; we, instead, believe that virtues are bound only to reason ['metà lógou']" (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1144 b 20–21). Also: "Socrates held that fortitude is a science ['epistéme']" (*Ibid.*, 1116 b 4); " . . . according to him [Socrates], no one consciously acts against his own good, but only does so because of ignorance" (1147 b 16). "To know ['eidénai'] justice and to be just coincide" (*Eudemian Ethics* 1216 b 4; cfr. *Magna Moralia* 1182 a 15 ff.; 1183 b 8). "Socrates incorrectly affirmed that virtue is reason ['logos]" (*Ibid.*, 1198 a 16). Therefore, Aristotle is not only the faithful witness of Socrates' ethical intellectualism, but also did something that the other two authors did not do — he offered an objective critique.

Regarding matters of dialogue, Aristotle points out the following general framework: Plato was initiated into philosophy by Cratylus. "Later he turned to Socrates, who occupied himself with moral matters and not natural reality. In this field he sought the universal [tò kathólou], and first developed the scientific thought of definitions." ['perì horismön' – *Metaphysics* 987 b 1] As we read elsewhere, "he was the first in this [ethical] area to seek general definitions." ("horízesthai kathólou"—*Ibid.*, 1078 b 17–32).

Aristotle offers another interesting description of the Socratic concept; "There are two things which can correctly be attributed to Socrates: the inductive procedure ['epaktikòi lógoi'] and the universal definition ['tò horízesthai kathólou']; both these things are connected to the principle of knowledge. It is true that Socrates did not see separate essences in the universal concepts and definitions. Still, others did so and called these essences ideas" (*Metaphysics* 1086 b 2, 5). In a word, Socrates (says Aristotle) did not separate the "concept" from the particular (*Ibid.*, 1086 b 2, 5) and was the first to investigate the essence ("Tì estin"). Hence, it is clear that, according to Aristotle, concepts or induction were not a knowledge sufficient in itself for Socrates, but that this knowledge was related to ethics. However, Socratic induction is not yet based on the crowning faculty, the "noeîn", but rests within debating practice, within the field of dialogue.

Plato: As A. E. Taylor explains well, Plato was a friend of Socrates, a "hetaîros", not a "mathetés", a student, but witness and historian of Socrates. To what point do his dialogues correspond to factual truth? Some pose the question in a different form: up to what point was Plato a Socratic?[195] Did Plato really understand Socrates? Was he the only one who understood Socrates? We answer that Plato is credible in his first (so-called) Socratic dialogues, based on the time in which they were written (a few years after Socrates' death) and on their content, which is basically in agreement with that of Xenophon and Aristotle. These dialogues are *Apology*, *Crito*, *Protagoras*, *Laches*, *Hippias Major and Minor*, *Charmides*, *Lysis*, *Euthyphron* and *Ion*. The other dialogues contain doctrinal hints and partial historical references; for example, in *Phaedo's* discussion of the hours before his death, in the *Symposium*, where Alcibiades recites an elegy to Socrates, etc.

Therefore, Plato's dialogues have a twofold goal: polemics against Polycrates' false accusations and the description of Socrates' positions compared to the Sophists.

Regarding the first goal, the *Apology* demonstrates that it is false to state that whoever occupies himself with philosophy "does not even recognise the gods" (*Apology* 18, a); whoever does not believe in the gods, does not introduce new ones (*Ibid.*, 26 c). There are also veiled polemics against Antisthenes, who had created a school in Athens and acted as if he were the only inheritor of Socratic thought. Socrates states that "I have never formed any school" (33 d). The *Crito* seems to respond to those people in Athens who accused the disciples of cowardice: if Socrates did not escape, he did so only for the sake of moral coherence. There was no shortage of opportunities.[196]

When Plato (was it around 395?) wrote *Protagoras*, it seems that he was turning to the Sophists in order to enlist them in a common cause. Hence he conceded some of their dearest theses: the eristic method and the division of words. He did the same in *Charmides* (on wisdom), in *Euthydemus* (on moral self-sufficiency), and in *Euthyphron* (on religion). However, the dialogue *Gorgias* marks Plato's passage from Socrates' "history" to his "philosophy", with which he violently attacked the Sophists. Later came the *Meno*, which represented the Academy's manifesto.

It is necessary to mention two attempts to reconstruct the Platonic Socrates with internal methods: one by Savino Blasucci (*Socrate, Saggio sugli aspetti costruttivi dell'ironia*, 2nd edition; Bari 1982), who sees the key to understanding Socrates' "animus" in irony, without pretending to resolve the complex historical problems implied by his personage.

The other attempt was made by Antonio Capizzi ("La testimonianza platonica, Contributo alla ricerca di una determinazione dell'elemento socratico nei dialoghi", in *Rasegna di Filosofia*, VI, 1957, 3, 4, pp. 205–221; 309–337; and, in an organic form, in *Socrate e i personaggi filosofici di Platone*, Rome 1970). He based himself on what he called the stylistic "formal principle" with which Plato considered philosophers: Parmenides, Zeno the Eleatic, Protagoras , Gorgias, Hippias, Prodicus, Thrasymachus. Since we possess non-Platonic and reliable fragments about these authors, we may compare the quotes, which (according to the author) demonstrate that: when Plato introduces them with the repetitive form ("it was said", "he said") or as a paraphrasing ("as he said in his poems" or other expressions or paraphrasings), he refers to doctrines historically professed by the people to whom he refers. This is not true in the simple formulas, in his occasional affirmations.

Applied to the Platonic Socrates, this philological law (using all due caution) would lead to the following conclusions: a) injustice is an evil to whoever does injustice; b) to learn is to remember; c) the truest "logos" is the most consistent one; d) among all things, the ones that are in accordance with the logos are true; e) concepts of beauty, good, greatness, etc., exist. Moreover, other typically Socratic elements would be the profession of philosophy, the affirmation of not knowing, the analogy of obstetrics, not occupying oneself with the natural sciences, the habit to publicly interrogate, brief reasonings, the ability to teach virtue, the demon, irony, and incredulity when faced with myth.

This attempt has been criticised by some authors, but it deserves consideration. However, we can see very well that the Socrates who has revealed himself here is very close to the thought of Xenophon and Aristotle. He is not Plato, although he reveals Plato's metaphysical flight.[197]

5. *Socrates, the Sophists and the Naturalists*

The construction of the original Socrates remains difficult; this explains the tendency scholars have to lean either toward being unilateral or agnosticism. These are those scholars' responses to the dilemma described above.

The unilateral versions describe a mystical-religious Socrates (Burnet, Taylor, Martinetti); a moralistic teacher (Labriola); a rationalistic moralist in ethical matters (Gomperz); a philosopher of ethics (Boutroux); a spiritual guide and problematic (Maier, Bertin, Banfi, Dieter Hermann); the founder of science's lay rationalism and a sceptic concerning religion (Joel, Zeller, Pohlmann), universal subjectivity (Hegel), or the value of the individual person (Kierkegaard); an Apollinear man of decadence and a monstrous and fatal demon of ruin (Nietzsche); and an atheistic Sophist (Böck, Döring).

For another reason, other authors are agnostics when faced by this difficulty. They declare that none of the sources are credible and that hence Socrates is a beautiful legend invented by those with ulterior interests (as L. Dupréel wrote in his essay *La legende socratiques et les sources de Platon*, Bruxelles 1922). Others state that we should be content with the little we have that is certain, as we limit our studies to an analysis of facts, episodes and anecdotes (as Olof Gigon proposes in *Sokrates*, Bern 1947). Still others declare that only the "Socratic question" exists (V. De Mahalgaes – Vilhena, *Le problème de Socrate*, 1951).

Notwithstanding the philological subtleties of recent historians, I believe that a fairly approximate reconstruction is possible (as I likewise stated for the sources). This can be achieved by first beginning with a distinction between Socrates and his contemporary rivals: the Sophists and the naturalists.

Regarding the *naturalists*, the question is not whether Socrates, for a certain time or in certain fields, had shared some of their theses. This is confirmed by Aristophanes' caricature and by Xenophon's statements, when the latter expressly said that Socrates willingly read his predecessors' works (*Memorabilia* I, 4, 6; II, 4, VI, 3). There is also the noted expression of Plato's *Phaedo* in which Socrates declares: " . . . when I was young, I was possessed by a true passion for the science which we call natural inquiry. And truly, it seemed to me that the highest science was the one that knew the causes of each thing and why each thing is born and perishes" (96, a). Nor can we fail to mention the sympathy he cultivated for the medical school at Cos;[198] perhaps he was also fascinated by Phliunte's late Pythagorean thought, as we can surmise from the appearance of two Pythagoreans in the dialogue *Phaedo*, Simmias and Cebetes, who intervene on the problem of the soul's immortality. We should also bring to mind his voyage to Samos together with Archelaus. However, it is also certain that at a given point (as Diogenes Laërtius notes) "having realised that there was no utility in the cosmological theses, and that they offered no interest for man, he took to discussing the philosophy of ethics, and he discussed these problems in the shops and the squares" (II, 5, 21). Therefore, Socrates – as Cicero elegantly stated –[199] brought philosophy from the heavens to the earth (*Disp. Tusc.*); he discovered man, the soul, the value of human existence, the sense of life.[200]

Regarding Socrates' relations with the Sophists, we should probably not place too much importance on the view making Socrates a great adversary of the Sophists, as Xenophon writes (*Memorabilia* I, 6). This passage attributes what Plato had done in *Gorgias* and the *Sophistes* to Socrates. As were the Sophists, Socrates was an able, sagacious and forceful speaker; it is also relevant that Critias forbade him the teaching of rhetoric (*Memorabilia* I, 2). However, we should immediately observe that he did not establish schools, nor did he accept their methods, nor did he want to be considered a teacher; he was disgusted by their "glischrologia" (Diogenes Laërtius, II, 5, 30), their "captious quibbling".[201] The Sophists were not his competitors, because with them he shared a criticism of certain institutions. However, for him reform was not to begin from political institutions, but from individual moral life. He particularly strove to help youth and free them from the discouragement into which they had fallen after the collapse of traditional authority and its values.[202] His was not a teaching of Gorgias' and Protagoras' "areté politiké", but of moral virtue; he was repelled by theories on the super-man (*Gorgias* 491 and 492 c). He did not even agree with the contradictions of the first Sophists (Protagoras, Gorgias), nor with second-generation eristics. Athens was an untamed colt to Socrates (*Apology* 30 a) needing optimistic understanding in order to be saved from desperation ("sotería toû bíou", *Protagoras*, 56 d).

Regarding Socrates' moral philosophy, he was different from the Sophists for three reasons: a) the human discourse tends to know things (“ê tà onta”) such as friendship, justice and prudence, and not a pompous, exhibitionistic and dilettante encyclopedic knowledge; b) it is necessary to admit the existence of natural moral law as a primary value higher than physical force (*Republic* I); c) one must respect positive order and not associate with enemies of civic order.

6. *The Socratic Method*

This differentiation of Socrates from the naturalists and the Sophists is already an advantage. Still, much remains to be done before we can reconstruct Socrates' figure. A second approach is a brief study of his method, which can be qualified as *dialogic* and neither antilogic (of the first Sophists) nor eristic (of the later Sophists). In texts it is sometimes called “ elenchistic”, or tending to convince. However, this term describes its terminus and not its structure; a colloquy does not consist (as Plato describes in the *Theaetetus*) of attempting a debating triumph, but in a discussion “in which the method of dialogue rules” (167 c).

This method has two complementary moments: irony and maieutics. *Irony* excludes the possibility of a monologue and is an attempt to establish contact with the interlocutor. It has a twofold value: one *ethical-educational*, in that it eludes an acquiescence to a superficial and fossilised conviction which is often bound to some presumption. Therefore, it leads to the “gnôthi sautin”, which is humility.[203] Indeed, bragging is incommunicative solitude; irony breaks this isolation through an interrogation (“eiromai” means interrogation in Greek), which is neither an offence nor an attack, but an invitation to discover truth. This *cognitive worth* was born from the confusion (“aporia”) that the interlocutor felt while discussing, in the form shock (hence Socrates compared his interrogations to torpedos, *Meno* 80, a-d) which incited progress in truth.

Socrates sometimes used irony by professing his ignorance, almost as if he were convincing his interlocutor that one may know little,[204] but that it will suffice to open oneself to truth.

Maieutics, or obstetrics (an art which Socrates claims he learned in an analogous sense from his mother – *Theaetetus*, 150 b) is the constructive moment of Socratic dialogue, because it involves not only the truth, but also the interlocutor, who must himself produce truth. In *Protagoras* we read: "No! I do not need to discuss this 'if you wish', this 'if it seems to you', but 'me', and I say 'me' and 'you' convinced that only then will reasoning be best discussed, when we will go through the self" (*Protagoras*, 331 c-d). Therefore, Socrates' work consists in an external aid so that the interlocutor would generate the truth he already possesses within. This Socratic humanism is revealed through a more attentive analysis of the two moments of dialogue: the end and the structure.

In its end, the Socratic dialogue rests at the limits of contradictions and eristics. While the Sophists were engaged in pure verbal disputes[205] and in social amusement or interplay,[206] for Socrates the colloquy was "dia-logue", a research of truth in communion;[207] there is no dialogue where the truth is "a priori" considered to be the privilege of few.Socrates substitutes Gorgias' "kairós" with the "gnôthi sautôn".

In its nature, the Socratic dialogue is a communal movement for the determination of a word, coming on the heels of an analysis of vocabulary and adding a critique of opinions (even if they are discordant) on a given object. Let me explain: through the dialogue, Socrates attempted to arrive at induction (Aristotle), or by analogous inferences ("parables", as Aristotle called them) at a consensus ("homologia", according to Plato, *Theaethetus*, 163 a) based on the word's unity when examined in all its meanings. This is not yet a notion of logical philosophy. The "definition" ("horismós", another of Aristotle's technical terms) would consist in a phonetic unity accompanied by a concept ("tò kathólou") emerging from various opinions and concluded from objective everyday experience ("dialérgontas katà géne tà prágmata", *Memorabilia* IV, 12). This is not yet the "definitio per genus et differentiam". The essence ("tò tí estin") defined in the Socratic fashion is not a metaphysically founded objective reality (as Plato or Aristotle would require), but a functional capacity of the word to collectively express the consensus obtained through dialogue. As Aristotle explains, Socrates' universal lacks the "chorismós", a metaphysical foundation (*Metaphysics* 1078, b 17), since *Socrates' object of research is not primarily the thing in itself, but the meanings of a word.* In this way we confirm what was said above.

7. *From Method to Philosophy*

The method is not yet a philosophy; Socrates possessed a method of dialogue which not only did not coincide with his philosophy (as we could also claim in Gorgias' case), but it implied various areas of research: education, spiritual guidance, grammar and logical research, etc. Here we must discover the moment of the dialogue where Socratic philosophy is revealed. Now, taking one of the many examples found in Platonic texts of Socrates and his actions, I offer to the reader the following syllogism, in which the various levels mentioned above can be distinguished.

– Virtue must be preferred to pleasure.
– Virtue is when a General sacrifices himself for his homeland.
– Therefore, the General (Alcibiades) will prefer to sacrifice himself for his homeland.

The major enunciates a universal proposition always taught by Socrates as a philosophically grounded doctrine. This principle does not enunciate the "competent science" (as Maier often said), or precepts, or ethical casuistry (what does the General do in times of peace? How will he instruct his soldiers? How will he act toward his family in times of war?, etc.), but a firm ethical principle. If Socrates were to have taught the habitual possession of this and other principles, then he would have become a moral philosopher (as we will state and prove later). If he is considered inspired by his "demon" (as Socrates himself sometimes claimed), then his doctrine could be called "prophetic". So, was Socrates a philosopher or a prophet? He was both.

The minor of the syllogism concerns the Socratic method, or the determination of "definitions" (Aristotle) or "episteme" through the construction of a "competent science", which is moral expertise or casuistry. Therefore, the minor is the inductive instrument with which Socrates, in his dialogue, determines professional deontology by taking recourse to "parables" (Aristotles), which are exemplifications, similarities and metaphors. What does the General do in times of peace? How does he act toward his children in times of war? With his interrogations, Socrates introduced his reflection on the "situation", but this is a principle illuminated by the syllogistic major (as I have illustrated).

The conclusion represents the "good advice" or exhortation ("protrépsis") to persuade the listener to do good, not because of the word's fascination, but through the force of demonstrative logic. In this way, Socrates was a spiritual guide and an educator, but he was also a philosopher and a scholar of education.

From this exposition, we can see that Socrates was a philosopher and prophet (major); he was an ironic and maieutic leader of dialogues (minor), and a spiritual guide and teacher (conclusion). However, these moments are distinct, even though they form a single program of missionary "action".

It seems to me that this observation is important, and we should not be surprised if the confusion of the three moments led various authors to form different interpretations of his "apostolate". For example, if someone considers only the prophetic and non-philosophical nature of the major, it would follow that Socrates was not a philosopher, but a prophet (perhaps a self-deceived one, as Nietzsche wrote). If we see in the major only the philosopher and not the religious and prophetic man, it would follow that Socrates was an agnostic moralist (Boutroux), or an atheistic philosopher (Böck, Pohlmann). If we completely refute the major, it would make Socrates a simple maieutic, and a empirical educator in practice (Xenophon), a man of dialogue, but not a philosopher;

etc. If we were to accept only the conclusion (as Maier proposes), then Socrates was only an exhorter, a spiritual guide, a counsellor of souls lacking any profound convictions and principles. The above aspects (which are sometimes distinct in Socrates' philosophy) must be grouped into a unity if we wish to furnish a global judgement on his message and his apostolate.

However, the task of a historian of philosophy is to inquire into the truth of the principles (or of the major of the syllogism) making him a philosopher; other treatises on specific aspects are best left to others. Still, the proof that Socrates was a philosopher is obtained by illustrating his ethical and religious thought.

8. *Socratic Morals*

Socrates arrived at the determination of his prevalently ethical "concepts" through the method of dialogue. Therefore, in themselves, these concepts do not yet constitute Socrates' ethical philosophy. They are born and terminate with the "competent science" ("epistéme") or professional ethics, which is not yet a philosophical doctrine. Nevertheless, these concepts, insofar as they are bound to the major premise of the syllogism, have a foundation. Their foundation is not metaphysical, but surely it is philosophical, in that this is a reflexive critical knowledge. Therefore, they are an indirect constituent of Socratic philosophy. However, his teaching on moral and religious principles is more philosophical, since these are the elements which guide his life, and not only his teaching. These elements are conscience, the ethical person, and moral virtue.

In Platonic language, *conscience* is called "phrónesis") (*Meno* 98 c; *Protagoras* 337 c, *Phaedrus* 250 d, etc.) and indicates a certain truth (*Republic*, *Philebus*, 13 e) or possession of a moral value based on principles. For example, "To use violence is not a sacred thing" (*Crito*, 51 b).

This is not a "metaphysical faith" (as Maier states),[208] as if Socrates believed in the moral ideal without being conscious of the ideal. Nor can we state that Socrates only knew how to teach "*how to do*", and not "*what to do*",[209] as if his dialogues did not go beyond factual analysis to indicate values.[210] It is true that he possessed a "human faith or hope", intuitions he did not express. However, Platonic sources show us that he also possessed a wisdom ("dianoeîsthai", nomízein"), which he wished to affirm and teach.[211] As A. Capizzi demonstrated (*art. cit.*, p. 326), Socrates professed that he pursued truth ("diókein tèn alétheain", *Gorgias* 492 c) as one of those who "declare themselves to be philosophers" ("pháskontes philósophoi eînai", ibid., 482 e) and for whom justice and sanctity (*Protagoras* 530 c, *Euthyphron*, 10 a, 11 b) are "prágmata" in the sense of having authentic values, as Rist explains (*op. cit.*, p. 123).

Therefore, moral conscience in Socrates is not equal to a "sentiment of guilt", but is a "responsibility" before divinity. The attitude of interior guilt (as Max Pohlenz explained) is found in Euripides, after Socrates, when the subject in *Orestes* declares his consciousness ("synoîda", *Orestes* 396) of having committed the horrendous crime of matricide. "This conception in its complexity, is nonetheless something new, even in the eyes of Euripides after Socrates, since Orestes must explain to Menelaus 'what he meant to say'." In Socrates we see the word "syneídesis" (Plato uses it in the infinitive "syneidenai", but with a "psychological-moral" meaning, not a psychoanalytical one) to indicate the practical intellect in its luminosity before the obscurity of sentiment.

This concept was further developed by the neo-Pythagoreans, Philo, and above all by Saint Paul and Seneca, who make the spirit the incorruptible judge of salvation (M. Pohlenz).

This explains why Socrates, above and beyond various interrogation on casuistry or "competent science", when faced with the various types of life and the various situations of the person when faced with duty, sought to awaken moral conscience in a sense of responsibility based on value and freedom. Life is not tragic, and one should confront it with the force of the spirit.

At this point a problem arises which already was hinted earlier: whether Socrates' conscience is autonomous or dependent on divinity. The question has been debated since some historians applied Kant's phrases to Socrates (W. Cappelle, Brunschwig and Maier) and stated that Socrates was only referring to his own conscience. It should be answered that Socrates proposed an autonomous and "theonomous" ethics at the same time. It was autonomous in its declaration that in the imminence of death he follows the "better reasons" ("lógos béltistos") – *Apology* 46 b) as they echo in his spirit as divine harmony (like that of the corybants). He also professed the "wisdom" ("oîda", *Apology*, 29 b) that evil should not be done at any cost. Therefore, moral values are not imposed by a divinity, but exist in themselves as such (as does sanctity – Euthyphron); God is their guarantor, not their author. On the other hand, not only does Socrates certainly profess the existence of a divinity, affirming that not admitting this ("hóti ou nomízo theoús eînai", *Ibid.*, 29 a) would go against factual evidence; but, before concluding his discourses on the imminence of death, he solemnly proclaims: "We act this way because God leads us". Hence morals are religious. There also remains the fact of the "demon", which, whatever interpretation we may make of it,[212] certainly represents a religious element in his morals. Indeed, Socrates states: ". . . the soul is a mysterious being possessing a prophetic virtue" (*Phaedrus*, 242 c). Hence, "those who know themselves know what is appropriate and discern what they can do, and what they are not" (*Memorabilia* IV, 2, 24).

The Moral Subject and Virtue: A second philosophical principle of Socratic ethics is the teaching that man is a moral being in general. This went against the beliefs of some aristocratic thought,[213] which limited morals only to some privileged and fortunate people ("eutychía"); Socrates held that doing good ("eupraxía") is possible for all. This "eupraxía" comes from the heart of all and consists of a "care of the soul" ("epiméleia tês psychês"), the cultivation of ethical perfection which is consummated in virtue. Socratic optimism on this point led to him teaching that the "eupraxia" and that virtues themselves can be taught. It suffices to know good (which is common to all) so that a person may become virtuous.

Socrates' ethical intellectualism is explicit. It is true that in *Hippias Major* it seems to be limited (376 b), but the texts of Xenophon and Plato are generally explicit. "He who lies voluntarily is less unjust than he who lies involuntarily" (*Memorabilia* IV, 2, 19 ff.). In Plato's *Laches* it is said that courage is a certain knowledge ("episteme", 194 d). Hence the consequent: if virtue is a wisdom, then it can be taught (*Meno*, 87 c). Socrates probably transferred the evidence of the "competent science" (he who rides horses is a "horseman", since he knows his craft – *Euthyphron*, 13 a; he who knows how to swim is a "swimmer" – *Gorgias*, 511 c; the bricklayer knows his art well and is excellent at construction – *Apology* 22, d-e, etc.); in that profession expertise is often identified with moral knowledge. Some historians are convinced that Socrates had accepted some Sophistic theories, especially those of Protagoras; in that case the "competent science" would equal moral philosophy, and the method would be identified with the philosophy. However, this thesis should not be taken to its extremes, as Maier did. In reality, the examples we have quoted are "parables" (Aristotle); and hence just as it is easy to acquire a professional craft, so it is easy to acquire knowledge of good. Therefore, Socrates' error is not in method (the facility of learning what is good), but in identifying the knowledge of good with its realisation. Aristotle later said that Socrates ignored the weakness of human will ("aphrasia"), but we Christians should not be surprised at this. Another limitation of Socratic ethics regards happiness, which is identified with virtue. Observe the progression: "eupraxia" = "areté" = "eudaimonia". A good action is virtue; virtue is happiness (*Crito*). The principle coincides with the end. In other words, the aim of an honest man is to feel himself virtuous; and, the famous "epiméleia tês psychês", or care of the soul, is merely an interior peace deriving from self-dominion.

However, it is exaggerated (as Maier proposed) to take this eudemonism to its extreme, to the point of the elimination of a supernatural ideal. Socrates (and his death is a guarantee of this) believed that there is a future life which has an effect on terrestrial happiness. But in this case, his message is not the "gospel-of-life-down-here", as opposed to the "gospel-of-the-up-there" of Christ (as Maier stated); his philosophy implies both one and the other gospel, even if (frankly speaking, and remembering that we are discussing a pagan philosopher) he places a eudemonistic accent on the "down-here".

This derives from the fact that for Socrates the soul's immortality is more a "religious faith" and a wavering "hope" (*Apology*, 40 c, 42 c) than a rational certainty.[214] His was a "religion of the soul more than a philosophy of the spirit".[215]

This did not stop Socrates from evidencing the value, not only of the honest man, but likewise of the useful and the agreeable man. Socratic happiness does not exclude pleasure, although pleasure is subordinate to virtue.[216]

9. *Socrates' Religion*

We can distinguish three aspects: his religious life or practice, his beliefs in the official religion, and his philosophical doctrine on divinity (or theodicy). Regarding *religious practice*, he was devoted; in his prayer to the god Pan (*Phaedrus*, 279 b) he invoked divine protection to become "good in his interior conscience" and externally coherent. Xenophon adds that he was respectful of sacrifices and official ceremonies. "It is necessary," he said, "to please the gods with rites" (*Memorabilia* IV, 3, 4). "It is necessary to placate the gods" (*Apology*, 30 a).[217] His life was dominated by a profound religious sense, which derived from the concept of Providence. Regarding his beliefs, he avoided both extremes: on the one hand, popular idolatry (*Euthyphron*, 6 a: "when someone recounts these things about the gods, I cannot accept them") and on the other hand, he professed "agreeing in general with what is believed about them" (*Phaedrus*, 230 a). In an almost Pythagorean tone, he recognises that with difficulty he came to know the gods. In this perspective, he accepted many gods, such as the sun, the stars and the moon, although these gods were subordinte to a supreme divinity (*Memorabilia* IV, 3, 14). While the general populace believed that God ignored some things, Socrates (as Xenophon states) affirmed that God knows everything that men intend to do and even that God guides men (*Memorabilia* I, 1, 19). Hence Socrates' respect for divination, which is the art of knowing the gods' will (*Memorabilia* IV, 3, 11–12). This derives from the fact that human intelligence is a particle of the Universal Mind (*Memorabilia*, I, 4, 8).

On the other hand, he was not "dogmatic" except on the things that were generally believed.

Regarding his theodicy, Socrates admitted the existence of positive arguments to prove the gods' existence. The most cogent argument is cosmic order: things manifest a divine disposition ("eutáktos") which presupposes a divine mind ("e theoû phrónesis") operating and governing the universe. Just as in man the eye and the ear are harmonic parts of a whole while they are also finalised to achieve precise goals, so the gods have bestowed beauty, order and finality on the world. Therefore, we must admit a "wise and benevolent artifice" (sophòs demiourgòs kaì philózoos" (*Memorabilia* I, 14), which is Providence ("prónoia").

In these statements we see a development beyond the simple pre-Socratic "arché" and a religious use for the word "mind", which Anaxagoras had already introduced. God is no longer the piston or pump of the universe, but the one who "loves life". Just as the soul sustains the body, so God sustains and governs the world.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SOCRATIC SCHOOLS

1. *The Socratic Schools in General*

Diogenes Laërtius states that Socrates' disciples ("hetâiroi", friends more than disciples) numbered ten; however, his followers were greater in number. Among them were orators Aeschines and Lysias, politicians Alcibiades and Pericles, author of tragedies Euripides and historian Xenophon. However, the discussion becomes more interesting when we consider the philosophical schools, those groups who accepted Socrates' message and gathered around a particularly gifted disciple. According to traditional historical sources, there were five schools: the school of Cynicism founded by Antisthenes, the Cyrenaic school belonging to Aristippus of Cyrene, the Erethric school led by Phaedo, the Megarian school brought into existence by Euclid, and the Academy founded by Plato.

Relations between the schools were never courteous; the first struggle broke out between Antisthenes and the Megarian group in 399–397, while Plato and Euclid were in Megara waging their common battle in defence of Socrates' memory against Polycrates' defamations. However, Plato quickly found reason to disagree with the meek Euclid, and although they shared the common goal of defending Socrates, Plato found himself isolated. Euclid approached Antisthenes and the Sophists of that period, and Plato left Megara to begin his voyages, which we will discuss later. Plato attempted a reconciliation around 370, when Xenophon wrote the *Memorabilia*; as likewise in 360, when his *Philebus* attempted an understanding with the Cyrenaics. In reality, each school based itself more on Socrates as a pretext than as a historical personage.

2. *The Megarians*

Euclid (435?–365?–not the mathematician who lived a century later) taught a form of ethical Eleatism. There is only one good, having a variety of names: wisdom, God, intellect. Therefore, evil as such does not exist (as Zeno and Parmenides stated that the non-being does not exist). Regarding *logic*, the Megarians did not negate immediate experience, which revealed a sensible reality with contraries: cold-hot, dry-wet, etc. From this they elaborate a negative dialectics of a type close to Zeno's. Hence their being termed eristic or dialectic. They especially defended their Eleatic monism in the logical sphere on two fronts: a) by developing a theory on judgement, and b) by refuting, along with Zeno, the doctrine of the many.[218]

Judgement: In logic, we often use propositions with a predicate to be attributed to the subject: "The horse runs", "man is good". Yet these are false propositions. In fact, universal ideas ("eíde") do not exist: when I say "man" (as Stilpo, one of the best-known members of the school, said in around 320), I am not stating any man. I indicate neither one man or another; therefore, I indicate no one (Diogenes Laërtius, II, 11, 119).

Even if we admit universal concepts, their predicability is not possible. For example, "running" does not belong to the horse's essence, just as "good" does not belong to man's essence. This is so true that various definitions are given for the subject, "man", and the predicate, "good" (Plutarch, *Adver. Colot.*, 28). Plato commented on this strange new theory by observing: "They do not want to concede that one can say 'good man', but they admit that good is good and man is man" (*Sophistes*, 251 c).

Change: Euclid studied Parmenides and Zeno (Diogenes Laërtius), and hence he upheld the impossibility of becoming. If – as we must say – only the One exists, then this One is also the Good. Consequently, nothing contrary to good can exist (Diogenes Laërtius, II, 106). Euclid also rejected analogy, in the following fashion: if one says that the many exist, then they must either be similar or dissimilar. If they are similar, then they do not differ; if they are dissimilar, then the parallel is superfluous (Diogenes Laërtius, II, 107). This defence of Eleatism quickly led the school to verbalism and logical pyrotechnics; for example, with the argument in which the impossibility of the possible is demonstrated. Diodorus Chronos, a follower of the school (who travelled to Egypt and died there of disappointment in 307, when Stilpo handed him an eristic defeat), said: "being is either necessary, and it really exists; or, it is not necessary; but in that case, it will never be, and hence it is not possible". (*Cic*, *De Fato.*, 17) Nor is it useful to state that the possible will at least come to be, because then truth (which is necessary) would derive from falsity. So whoever is standing will always remain standing, and who is seated will always remain seated (Aristotle, *Metaphysics* IX, 1047 a).

Some of the Sophistic "arguments" are famous: the "chain-syllogism", or cumulus: if you take one grain off a heap, the heap does not diminish; therefore, the heap remains if you take all the grains off one by one. There is also the "bald man's" example regarding hair and the bristles on a horse's tail, and the "victorious" sophism on the impossibility of the possible (as we mentioned above). Others are the "electra", "the wall", "the concealed", etc. (cfr. Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Math.* X, 34).

Judging from the fame they acquired, it seems that the Megarians and Cynics, with their bravura and strange doctrines, obscured the Academy and the Peripatetic School.[219] Nevertheless, their later followers, such as Eubulides of Miletus (fourth century) and Asclepiad of Phliuntes (third century) contributed with Alexinus (a name changed to "Elenxinus" due to his abilities as a quibbler) in keeping the public attention with the subtleties and verbal disputes. Still, the school disappeared and its sceptic orientation was inherited by Pyrrhonism.

3. *The Cynics*

Antisthenes, born of an Athenian father and a Thracian mother, brought with his tendencies and temperament the imprint of a semi-barbarian. Nothing is known of his birth or death, but he was certainly older than Plato. Therefore, he was probably born around 435 and died in 370. He founded a school in a place called "Cynosarge" (tomb of the dog); hence the name of "dogs" ("kynes", which brought fourth "cynics") given to his followers. The name probably is traceable to the fact that he was a hard and irritable man opposed to the frivolity of Athenians. Aristotle called him "stupid" and a "crazy Socrates". One day Socrates saw him clothed in his torn cloak and said, "I see your arrogance in your cloak" (Diogenes Laërtius, VII, 11).

This austerity was manifested in idiosyncrasies directed against democracy, the official religion, and culture.

He attacked Polycrates in defence of Socrates, and Plato on the doctrine of ideas (in agreement with the Megarians). Supposedly he said: "O Plato, I see the horse, but not the "horse-ness'", to which Plato apparently responded: "Because you do not have eyes to see it".

There are three points deserving further consideration: his logical doctrine, ethics and theodicy.

In logic Antisthenes professed a nominalism based on sensism. He believed that, since there was no distinction between sensible and intellectual knowledge, primary value in logic should be concentrated on the name, not on the sensible reality. Therefore, judgement does not express the mind's passage from the implicit to the explicit but the simple conjunction of names (subject and predicate, without copula). Therefore, it is not possible to create a definition through genus and differences; this would imply an authentic gnoseology, and not (as the Cynics taught) the logical art

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of combination.[220] Hence the impossibility of contradiction ("ouk esti antilégein – *Arist. Topica* 104 b 20). If the real ("to ón") is only a name or a spoken sound, then it is not possible for us to ask whether a name or simple word is true or false. The gnoseological problem is reduced to an analysis of the relation between word and representation ("onomàton epískepsis"), which can only be resolved in an identity. Therefore, a deformity between image and name will never be possible.[221] The impossibility of contradiction implies more the radical affirmation of the existence of truth than it implies Scepticism.

Cynic ethics were inspired by Hercules, the hero of toil and virtue, and was the proverbial school of all antiquity, and its thought could be summarised as a "message of freedom" as an application of Socratic self-sufficiency, a detachment from the world and from all people, from society. "Not needing anything" was the motto of the school; hence the precept to free oneself of all appetites, because they are evil and obstruct freedom. Antisthenes supposedly said: "I would rather go insane than experience pleasure". In particular, he thought that the pleasures of sex are the greatest slavery for a free spirit. Thus his ferocious invective: "If I were to have Aphrodite in my hands, I would shoot her" (Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* II, 20). As Giovanni Reale correctly observes, while Plato's condemnation of pleasure derives from his dualistic conception of man and his Orphic-religious vision of the body as the soul's tomb, Antisthenes condemns pleasures as being contrary to interior freedom.[222]

Antisthenes also preached the uselessness of honours. To one person who told him, "many praise you", he shot back, "what have I done wrong?" (Diogenes Laërtius VI, 8). He disregarded riches: "No one who loves money is good; either a king, or a private citizen" (Stobaeus, *Ant*, III, 1, 28). Therefore, "the lack of glory and fame is good" (Diogenes Laërtius VI, 11).

This ethics, or "philosophy of the Greek proletariat" (Gomperz) was taken to its extreme consequences by his followers, such as Diogenes of Synopes (413 – 323?), who was called a "crazy Socrates" for his extravagant forms of life. The anecdotes are famous; Diogenes Laërtius dedicated as many pages to this popular ancient figure as he did to Aristotle! Naturally, the recounting was full of homourous witticisms and biting mockery. It suffices to bring to mind the knapsack and the cane, the barrel he lived in, and his encounter with Alexander the Great. Other later Cynics were the Theban Crates, a nobleman who renounced everything to follow the model of life for a Cynic, Hipparchia, her brother Metrocles of Thracia, Merippus, Menedemus, etc.[223]

Theodicy: According to Diogenes Laërtius, Antisthenes wrote ten volumes. However, no one lists a title referring to the problem of divinity, unless we consider "What is in Hades", a chapter from the seventh volume, a religious treatise. However, Diogenes Laërtius recounts a significant story. One day Antisthenes met an Orphic priest, who exalted the fate of those initiated in Hades. Antisthenes replied: "Then why do you not die?" (Diogenes Laërtius VI, 1, 3). This reveals a peculiar religious conception he held. First of all, he believed that the gods are many by convention, ("nómoi"), but in reality ("physei") there is only one.[224] Faced with Homeric mythology, he professed the allegory he called "hypónoia", which had already been used by Diogenes of Apollonia (Diels II B 53, 8), who interpreted Zeus as air. The allegory entered the philosophical thought of Critias and Prodicus. In Xenophon's *Symposium*, Socrates himself proposes the principle of "hyponoia" in religious matters where mythology was unacceptable. The allegory has a remote root and seems to be traceable to the Pythagoreans.[225] Therefore, we can state that Antisthenes professed a form of moderated illuminism which he took from Socrates, whose singular monotheism favoured Antisthenes' individualistic and anti-social conception. Cercides of Megalopolis (third century B.C.) was even more radical, when he mockingly commented on superstition and current mythology.[226]

4. *The Cyrenaics*

Aristippus (435? – 365?) of Cyrene was a man of very bad habits, a Sophist in Athens, Aegine and Syracuse. His Hedonism was based on physical and gnoseological doctrines. Together with Protagoras, he taught that sensation is the only criterion of truth. In the moral sphere, this principle means that good is pleasure in act, which consists of the encounter between object and subject. The two terms, once abstract, become concrete and real as they encounter each another ("paròn páthos').

Spiritual objects, such as fame and honour, may be bestowed; but they are subordinate to corporeal objects, since happiness is the sum total of sensual pleasure. However, happiness is not sought in itself, but in individual pleasures.

The Cyrenaic school numbered among its followers *Theodorus*, called "the atheist", a theoretician and a cosmopolitan, refined in his manners, a negator of any religion. Another personage belonging to the school was a certain *Hegesias* (fourth and third centuries B.C.) called the "advocate of death" because in his pamphlet *Suicide* he stated that life is a foolish good.

Evemerus of Messenia (317–297) explained the origin of religion psychologically, as some Sophists had done. *Anniceris* based his morals on sympathy.[227]

CHAPTER THREE

PLATO

1. *Plato's Life*

Plato was born in Athens on the seventh day of Targellion (spring) in 428; his father was Ariston and his mother Perittion, and both had royal blood. The father was a descendant of king Codrus, the mother of Solon. The son's name, Aristocles, was changed to Plato either because of the size of his forehead (in Greek, "plátos" means largeness), or of his shoulders, or in honour of his grandfather of the same name (Diogenes Laërtius III, 4). Very little is known of his two brothers, Glaucon and Adamantus. His sister Poton was mother of Speusippus, who succeeded Plato at the Academy. After Ariston's death, Perittion remarried and had another child, Plato's step-brother Antiphon.

Although he had a weak voice, he was so handsome that Xenophon claims he was second in beauty in all Athens to Alcibiades. He was related to Charmides and Critias; leaders of the government of the Thirty, but he did not agree with their politics.

According to Aristotle, Plato's earliest teacher was the philosopher Cratylus (Metaphysics, 987 b 1); perhaps it was also in this period (from adolescence to about 20 years of age) that he followed Hermogenes the Eleatic. However, in 407 he became acquainted with Socrates, and the latter became his only teacher until the time of his death. One story has it that the night before their encounter, Socrates had a dream about a featherless swan that put on wings and began a great flight. It is not known with certainty whether Plato wrote in this period; therefore, perhaps we may not consider credible what Socrates reportedly said after hearing his young student's *Lysis*; "for Hercules' sake, how many untruths this young man says about me" (Diogenes Laërtius III, 35). In the tragic times of Socrates' death, it seems that Plato left Athens and travelled to his farm in Aegine to escape the reprisals of the democratic government; hence he was accused by Aristippus of cowardice (*Ibid*, III, 36). Still, Plato was not a fearful man evading duty – he was a soldier three times, perhaps at the service of his powerful relatives.

After Socrates' death he went to Megara with Euclid (399) and began to write his first dialogues in memory and defence of his mentor. However, his stay in Megara must have been short, due to doctrinal dissent; he travelled to Cyrene (perhaps stopping in Crete) where he met Theodorus the mathematician. From there he travelled to Italy, to see the Pythagoreans Archytas and Eurytus at Tarentum. Then he visited the large centres of Metapontus, Paetelia and Kroton, finally travelling to Sicily "to see the island and the craters in the time of the tyrant Dionysius, son of Hermocrates" (Diogenes Laërtius III, 18). He stayed in Syracuse for three years. His friendship with Dionysius turned into a stormy battle: Plato was imprisoned and sold as a slave. His deportation to Aegine was providential, since he was ransomed and returned to Athens a free man, probably around the year 390. It was perhaps in this time that he voyaged to Egypt, in order to become acquainted with the science of the Egyptian priests (Diogenes Laërtius III, 6). Some modern historians strongly doubt that he took that voyage. In 387 he took up residence once again in Athens and founded the Academy at 40 years of age, on the property of a certain Academus by the city's public parks, or the "woody suburban gymnasium" (Diogenes Laërtius III, 9). The school became a "thyasus" on the model of the Pythagorean communities he had frequented in Italy. It was probably ruled by a religious statute; the terrain was dotted with avenues, a temple to the Muses and the Graces, and scientific sections. Later a library was built,[228] and it became a study centre open to all the greatest geniuses of the time. In short, it was the first European university. However, from the Herculanum papyri we know that among the first students, there was even a Chaldean. The dialogue *Meno* can be considered a manifesto of its foundation; at that time Plato began to write the dialogues of his maturity such as the *Phaedo*, the *Symposium*, the *Republic* and the *Phaedrus*. The Academy's notoriety attracted old acquaintances, such as Isocrates, but only for a short time; Isocrates could not manage an agreement with Plato. In 367 he was again invited to Syracuse; Plato probably entrusted the Academy temporarily to Eudoxus (who was only 28 years old) so as to attempt to realise his idea to make Syracuse the ideal city he had projected in the *Republic*. However, in Syracuse he found the younger Dionysius, hardly over twenty years of age (the actual ruler was his uncle, Dion) and full of pretexts and fatuous ambitions. Plato requested "men and territory" for the foundation of his "Republic" (Diogenes Laërtius III, 21), but Dionysius did not keep his promise, and instead endangered Plato's life. A ship sent from Tarentum by Plato's friend Archytas freed him from Dionysius and returned him to Athens after an absence of about two years.

He again travelled to Sicily in 361 with Eudoxus to attempt a reconciliation between the younger Dionysius and Dion (who had been exiled to Athens). But the danger was even greater; Plato returned definitively to Athens, while events in Syracuse kept changing for the worse.[229] He took care of his school and the education of his students (among whom was the young Aristotle) until his death at the age of 80. He left "on the wax", or incomplete his last work, "The Laws", which was completed by the copyist, Philippus of Opus. He was buried in the Academy, where a statue was erected in his honour.

2. *The Authenticity of his Writings*

The only ancient Greek philosopher whose works we have in their entirely is Plato. However, this fortunate event also has its counterpart because there have been doubts about their authenticity and chronology for over 2000 years.[230]

The doubts concerning authenticity continued throughout antiquity,[231] and they continue even today. For an analysis of the problem of authenticity, we can begin with an affirmation made in the first century B.C.: the *Corpus platonicum*, the collection of works attributed to Plato in most remote times, contains *ten non-Platonic or spurious works.* "*All agree* in considering the following dialogues spurious: *Midon* or the *Breeder of Horses*, the *Erissia* or *Erisistratus*, the *Alcyon*, *Acephalis* or *Sysyphos* the *Axiochus*, the *Pheaces*, the *Demodochus*, *Chelidon*, the *Seventh Day*, and the *Epinomis*" (Diogenes Laërtius III, 62).[232]

Having excluded these ten works, let us list the nine tetralogies of Thrasyllus, italicising those works which are still the object of doubt today:

1) Euthyphron, Apology, Crito, Phaedo;
2) Cratylus, Theaetetus, Sophistes, Politicus;
3) Parmenides, Philebus, Symposium, Phaedrus;
4) Alcibiades I, *Alcibiades II*, *Hipparchus*, *Lovers*;
5) *Theagetes*, Charmides, Laches, Lysis;
6) Euthydemus, Protagoras, Gorgias, Meno
7) Hippias I, Hippias II, Ion, *Menexenus* (*or Epitaphion*);
8) Clytophon, Republic, Timaeus, Critias or Atlantic;
9) *Minoxes*, Laws, *Epinomis*,[233] thirteen letters.

A problem has recently arisen on the authenticity of the letters. We should first of all observe that number XIII is a letter of Dion to Dionysius; therefore, it pertains only extrinsically to the *Corpus platonicum*. Second, there are many opinions about the other twelve letters. Zeller and Wendland, at the beginning of this century, rejected all of them; more recently this was also done by Antonio Maddalena (*Platone*, *Le lettere*, Bari 1948). However, for the last few decades there has been more of an inclination to accept as authentic the seventh and eighth letters, as G. Pasquali wrote (*Le lettere di Platone*, Florence 1938).

Regarding Thrasyllus' list, there are varied opinions from modern philologists. Beginning with the nineteenth centuries, some scholars proclaimed that over half of the works were false; some even went further, such as Schaarschmitt (Bonn 1886), whc reduced the authentic works to nine, while Krohn (Halle 1878) said that only the *Republic* is authentic.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, after the hypercritical and iconoclastic period, the majority of scholars returned to a serene reconsideration of ancient tradition. The principle criteria for accepting a dialogue as authentic are: a) *tradition*, as it was written for us by Thrasyllus and Aristophanes; b) *ancient testimonials*, such as commentaries on Aristotle by Panaetius, Proclus, Plotinus, etc; c) *the content*, as it is confirmed by later authors; d) *the artistic value*; e) *the linguistic form*. Without a doubt, the individual criteria by themselves do not offer an absolute guarantee. For example, Aristotle never mentions the *Protagoras*, but there is no doubt of this dialogue's authenticity. Even weaker criteria are those of content or artistic value, which nevertheless lead us to excluding from the Platonic dialogues works such as *Lovers*, *Theagetes*, etc.

To conclude, many authors tend to exclude the following titles from Thrasyllus' catalogue. *Alcibiads I*, *Hipparchus*, *Theagetes*, *Minoxes*, *Clytophon and Epimonides*. There then remain 27 dialogues and two letters, while the discussions on authenticity continue.[234]

3. *The Chronology of his Writings*

There are two extreme dates between which we place Plato's writings: the first, which varies between the years 407 – 400, and the other, after 347. There are some who consider the majority of the Platonic dialogues to be stenographic dictations of Socrates' discourses from 407 – 399. This opinion is shared by Wilamowitz-Möllendorf and partly by the Scottish school, as we will discuss later. However, this thesis faces two difficulties: a) it would make Socrates the discoverer of the ideas, which was rejected by

Aristotle (*Metaphysics* 987 b 1 ff.); b) as Alfred Croiset writes (*Histoire de la littérature grecque*, IV, 2nd edition, p. 279), Plato had no reason to write about Socrates when Socrates was there to see and hear in the plazas and the gymnasiums. Therefore, Plato began to write only after Socrates' death; dubious youthful writings (dithyrambs, lyrical songs and tragedies, as Diogenes Laërtius lists them – III, 5) do not enter into the *Corpus platonicum*.

The other extreme, to consider Platonic works wholly or in part as works of his alumni, especially of Polemon (314 – 270), has been supported by Joseph Zürcher,[235] but with unacceptable arguments. Therefore, it only remains to recognise the time of Plato's writings to be the years 399 – 347. However, the chronological order through these fifty years is not easy to determine; and, we should not hide the ingenuity of philologists in their attempt to find a congruous and objectively based division. There have been about four criteria chosen: internal, external, stylistic and literary. The *internal criteria* (already proposed by Tenneman, Leipzig, 1792) were proposed again recently by Natorp and Windelband (1905), and consist in taking an outline or sample of doctrine believed to be genuine, and verifying them according to a certain doctrinal scale. However, this method implies a vicious circle and goes against a psychological rule: the doctrinal evolution of the thinker.

Some authors took recourse with greater success in *external criteria*: one works from the historical data given by Aristotle that the Republic was written before the Laws. Now, some dialogues are connected to each other through explicit mentions; for instance, *Theaetetus* mentions *Sophistes*, *Sophistes* refers to *Politicus*, and *Critias* hearkens back to *Timaeus*.[236] Moreover we can always take recourse to the greater or lesser vividness in Plato's presentation of Socrates (E. Munk, Berlin 1857) with reference to the years after his death. We can also refer to dates and facts of that era which were recorded by Plato (*Uebeweg*, Vienna I, 61).

Naturally, these criteria work from an hypothesis which is not demonstrable, according to which the Platonic dialogues could be considered as reports of the events of Plato and his school. However, we do not have proof of this;[237] the high grade of probability offered by these criteria suggest a use of more cogent criteria, which we would call stylistic. These criteria refer to the study of Platonic style, and especially vocabulary. Studies of this type were done by Schone (Leipzig, 1862), L. Campbell (Oxford 1867, 1889, 1894), Dittenberger (Berlin 1888), Peipers (Lipsia, 1883), Ritter (Stuttgart, 1888 – he gave this method the name of "Sprachstatistik"), etc. A definitive form was given to this study by W. Lutoslawski (*The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, London–New York 1897; 2nd edition, 1905. See also "Plato's Change of Mind" in *Acts of the International Philosophical Congress*, Amsterdam 1947, vol. I, pp. 68 ff.).

The criterion or method consists of a statistical analysis of the stylistic variants of parts of the discourses (called "stylemes": such as the Greek words "katháper", "allà", "mén", "ón", "ousía", "ósper", etc.) and is based on the psychological law that an author changes styles only in accidental peculiarities. Stylistic whim is possible only if whim were the goal of the book, which is completely unthinkable in Plato.[238]

As results from the table we outline below, we cannot negate some notable results for this method (which is more properly termed *stylometric*). However, Ritter went further than Lutoslawski and added the pretext of dating these dialogues (*Neue Untersuchungen über Platon*, Munich 1910, p. 246), which stirred up a hornets' nest of debate among philologists. Zeller himself intervened against Ritter, but he lost the battle when Ritter verified the effectiveness of his method by applying it to the works of Goethe whose dates and chronology we know with certainty.

Nevertheless, the limits of the stylometric method are: a) only some "stylemes" have been studied. Therefore, the linguistic peculiarities of the individual dialogues remain a problem; b) the method groups the dialogues, but does not order them. It does not establish the date (cardinal number), but the succession (ordinal number); c) the linguistic results do not agree with the exegetic

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ones. For example, Ritter, who was so learned in stylometry, reduces to figments of fantasy the Platonic doctrines on reminiscence, the immortality of the soul, and the theory of ideas; d) for the brief dialogues, the stylometric method cannot be applied (Ion, Eutyphron, Critias). Lutoslawski understood Plato in the pantheistic sense, which seems excessive;[239] e) it cannot always be guaranteed that there is an evolution from dialogue to dialogue, as we can see with Phaedo and the Republic.[240] Therefore, we can say, as D. Ross states: "every ordering of the dialogues which could be proposed is necessarily very hypothetical".[241]

The stylometric criterion finds perfection and confirmation in the literary criterion, which finds its inspiration in Plato himself (*Republic*, 392 c ff.), who declares that the literary forms are narrative, dramatic and mixed. Plato, who in the Republic described the dramatic work as unworthy of every artistic masterpiece, changes his opinion in the *Theaethetus* (143 c) and makes a drama of the dialogue. Now, if we examine the dialogues, we can observe[242] that there are four groups, which are regulated by a different stylistic canon:

a) dramatic dialogue: from the *Apology* to *Cratylus*;
b) narrative dialogues: from some Socratic dialogues through the *Symposium*, *Phaedo* and *Republic*;
c) mixed dialogues: *Theaethetus*, *Parmenides*, *Menexenus* and *Phaedrus*;
d) dramatic: all the others.

We can organise the four groups with four terms: the *Socratic group*, or youthful dialogues (*Apology*, *Euthyphron*, *Crito*, *Charmides*, *Laches*, *Ion*, *Protagoras*, *Euthydemus*, *Republic I*, *Gorgias*), composed from 399 to 387; b) *the ideal group* (*Cratylus*, *Meno*, *Symposium*, *Phaedo*, *Republic II-X*, *Phaedrus*) written from 387 and 368; c) *dialectic group* (*Parmenides*, *Theaethetus*, *Sophistes*, *Politicus*, *Philebus*) written from 367 through 361; d) *Pythagorean, or final, group* (*Timaeus*, *Critias*, *Laws*) written after 360.

		Number and Value of the stylistic peculiarities				
Chron Order	Dialogue	× 1 (Acc.)	× 2 (Rep.)	× 3 (Freq.)	× 4 (Very Freq.)	Affinity Number
1.	Apology	6	2	1	–	13
2.	Euthyphron	12	2	1	–	17
3.	Crito	13	–	5	–	28
4.	Charmides	13	5	6	–	41
5.	Laches	19	4	6	–	51
6.	Protagoras	21	9	4	–	51
7.	Meno	20	16	3	–	61
8.	Euthydemus	22	5	7	–	53
9.	Gorgias	31	20	6	–	89
10.	Cratylus	33	16	15	15	114
11.	Symposium	42	16	8	–	98
12.	Phaedo	43	26	17	2	154
13.	Republic I	28	6	3	–	49
14.	Republic II-IV	47	37	32	2	225
15.	Republic V-VII	56	29	40	7	262
16.	Republic VIII-IX	47	22	27	3	184
17.	Republic X	35	14	15	6	132
18.	Phaedro	54	36	22	7	220
19.	Theaethetus	58	41	31	–	233
20.	Parmenides	56	42	21	10	243
21.	Sophistes	139	36	59	20	468
22.	Politicus	163	43	56	19	493
23.	Philebus	100	38	55	16	405
24.	Timaeus	123	58	44	14	427
25.	Critias	51	8	18	12	169
26.	Laws	175	176	37	20	718

With this chronological distribution, based on plausible arguments, one can distinguish in Plato the Socratic period, which had two directions: one *negative direction of rejection*, against the judges who issued their verdict on Socrates, defence against Polycrates' attacks, and challenge to the Sophists and revolutionaries; the other a *positive* one of Socrates' exaltation, with particular reference of his religiosity (Euthyphron), his moral doctrine (*Laches*, *Charmides*, *Lysis*, *Hippias Major*) and his aesthetics (*Ion*).

However, after his first voyage to Italy and the contact with Pythagoreans, "Socratic science of the concept went in research of a metaphysics".[243] This purification of the Socratic concept (which went against Gorgias' rhetoric and was a re-evaluation of Cratylus' language as an instrument of the idea), Plato reached the second moment of his philosophy, *the discovery of the ideas*, expressed in dialogues and called "ideals" in the strict sense. There then follows a third period of *reflection on the idea itself*; which is subjected to a metaphysical critique in all it aspects: ontological (*Parmenides*), gnoseological (*Theaetetus*), participative (*Sophistes*), political (*Politicus*), and moral (*Philebus*).

The fourth Platonic period is a reconsideration of all his philosophy in the light of new elements he took from Pythagorean doctrine (*Critias*, *Timaeus*, *Laws*).

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SPIRIT OF PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY

1. *Introduction to Platonic Philosophy*

It is not easy to examine Platonic thought. Plato is a sovereign master and literary genius, a scientist, historian and above all philosopher, who left his imprint on generations of thinkers and on all Western culture. An "eternal" Platonism exists, a propagation through the centuries of a vital system of thought which leads to a review of theses, orientations and institutions: from Plotinus to Proclus, from St. Augustine to the medieval Franciscan school, from Malebranche to Gioberti, Rosmini, etc. This lasting fascination arises from a sprouting of thought which we have to determine here, at the beginning of our discussion of Platonic philosophy.

From now, we state that there are various requisitions and interpretations of Plato; the *requisitions* are the "absorbing" interpretations with which Plato is made to coincide with some theory. We will not spend much time on these:[244] they are underlinings, emphases and distortions determined by a particular theory and not by historical studies.

There are two important *interpretations*: one *systematic* and one *genetic*.

The systematic interpretation states that Plato wrote his dialogues by following a precise programmatic design which he established in the *Phaedrus*. This is supported by F. Schleiermacher (Berlin

1804–1810). In this way, the dialogues which do not enter this system are considered spurious; hence Platonic philosophy is turned into a defined canon of doctrines without life and development. However, this interpretation is not always expressed in the same way. We bring to mind the formulations of Léon Robin (*Platon*, Paris 1938), A. J. Festurgière (*Contemplation et vie contemplative selon Platon*, Paris 1936–1950) and J. M. Rist (*Eros and Psyche, Studies in Plato*, *Plotinus* and *Origen*, Toronto 1964). According to Giovanni Reale, the systematic interpretation has undergone three phases: 1) the Academy read Plato in a metaphysical and gnoseological way, leaving all other aspects in the shadows: 2) the neo-Platonist thinkers read Plato according to a religious perspective; 3) recently, the efforts have concentrated on politics;[245] but in very recent times, Zeller followed the Hegelian dialectic method to find in Plato three passages, from Nature to the Idea and from Idea to Spirit. However, this latter attempt is not an interpretation, but rather a requisition.[246]

In general, we can state that the systematic interpretation, although it favours partial researches, leaves us dissatisfied, for the reasons listed above: it imposes a "petitio principii" and it goes against the psychological laws of every thinker's spiritual evolution.

The genetic interpretation intends to remedy this defect in method. It was proposed by W. F. Herman (1839) and continued to be proposed alternately from 1850 to 1900, until it found in the Platonic studies and in the stylometric method its confirmation and further development. Still, the occasional returns to the systematic interpretation show just how complex the problem is. In recent times, the genetic interpretation has had authoritative supporters, such as Luigi Stefanini (with his famous thesis on the "Platonic skepsis''),[247] Paul Friedländer,[248] Ambrogio Manno,[249] K. Feibleman,[250] etc. According to this interpretation, Plato manifested a restless mind which was always trying to clarify and surpass itself, so his philosophy (more than his "system") could be called a "spirit".

However, this attempt should be described more in detail. There are two theses in presenting Plato's doctrinal evolution: one called "Scottish" or "English", in that is is especially supported by Anglo – Saxon scholars like J. Burnet (London 1924), A. E. Taylor (London 1927), and also the Dutch philosopher C. J. De Vogel (1936) and other researchers. The other is a more moderated version (which we support).

The first creates two periods of Plato's thought, in which the first would regard his total adhesion to Socrates, so much so that Plato (almost) became a stenographer. Then there supposedly came a crisis so great that *Parmenides* revealed "a crisis of scepticism" comparable to that of Kant after reading Hume.

The second thesis postulates a continuous but not homogeneous evolution in Plato's thought, which cannot be quantified in chronological terms or in doctrinal theses. Hence the field remains open for further studies, without the pretext of reaching an absolute knowledge of Plato's "spirit". If this method is "dispersive",[251] then it is so because of the conclusions it reaches; but it is certainly not "problematic", much less sceptical (Levi). Nor does this view turn Plato into an always-dissatisfied and restless researcher, but rather a thinker open to the acquisitions made available through his contact with other doctrines: for example, the Hedonism modified by Eudoxus (which is echoed in *Philebus*),[252] Pythagoreanism (as evidence in the *Timaeus*). Otherwise, we could not explain the doctrinal passage from the implicit to the explicit (*Theaethetus*, 150 c, d), or the confession of a certain dissatisfaction, such as when we read that "only God knows whether this is true" (*Meno*, 86 b), or "we do not tend solely to victory for me or for you; as far as I am concerned, I am never absolutely certain" (*Philebus*, 14 b), or another surprising declaration: " . . . practically, we do not know anything" (*Laws*, 732 a).

Therefore, without establishing a complete inventory of the elements or signs through which the evolution of Platonic philosophy manifests itself, we may nonetheless tarry on two external criteria, dialogue and language, and two internal elements, the method and the myth-logos.

2. *The Dialogue as the Exterior Sign of Plato's Evolution*

To know the "spirit" of Platonic philosophy we could discuss his literary form, which is the dialogue; this is a literary form which expresses itself in the guise of drama or a narration of a research session. As we read in Diogenes Laërtius, this literary form is not Plato's invention, but can be traced back to Zeno the Eleatic and Alaxamenus of Teos (Diogenes Laërtius III, 48), even if Diogenes added: "but in my opinion, Plato has the full right to be termed the inventor of the dialogue" (*Ibid.*).

We ask ourselves: what is this dialogue? There are various answers: a) according to Leo Elders,[253] the dialogue is an instrument for a common research of truth, through the debating of opinions; b) J. Stenzel's opinion[254] is more restrictive: the dialogue is imitative, because it traces Socrates' historical figure in the poetically formed Socratic dialogues. Instead, the dialogue loses every historical value when Plato discusses his philosophy. This is the position we agree with: when Plato founded his own philosophy after 387, the dialogue merely became an exterior form of a personal research. In *Sophistes*, Plato states that the dialogue is a "silent discourse that the soul performs with itself" (263 c), and in *Philebus* he repeats: "know yourself", not the dialogue, is the principle of philosophy" (48 d). In the *Phaedrus* he states, "...the soul also has something of the prophetic" (242 c), which means that truth exists in man before the dialogue.

Therefore, Plato is an artist who soberly gives some descriptions of the ambience in order to advance the discussion; but, the dialogue cannot be compared with Buddha's dogmatic discourses, or with the sages' reflections in the Indian Upanishad. Plato does not possess all the truth,[255] nor is he a dilettante avoiding scientific research.[256] The dialogue is a middle road between possession and research, an act of faithfulness to Socrates and an instrument of personal conquest. Neither the Buddhist catechism nor the Aristotelian treatise was necessary, because "philosophy belongs to the discourse of he who knows, to the living and animated discourse" (*Phaedrus* 276 a). In this way we explain the character of the so-called negative Socratic dialogues, which do not reach a well-defined conclusion (*Euthyphron*, *Hippias Major*, *Charmides*, *Protagoras*, *Lysis*, *Ion*, *Cratylus*) and in which the "not knowing" of the historical Socrates appears. We also explain the *constructive* dialogues, in which Plato passes from the Socratic dialogue to dialectics.

This meaning of the dialogue explains its suspension during the announcement of some great doctrine, especially the one delineating the myths. This is true in the myth of Er (*Republic*), in the account of the priestess Diothyma (*Symposium*), in the palinode (*Phaedrus*) and in the myth of Chronus (*Politicus*). The stopping of the dialogue means the possession of truth; the beginning of a dialogue means the continuation of a personal, and not communal, research.

And hence, we cannot accept Öhler's thesis, which states that the monologue mentioned by Plato in the *Phaedrus* should not be understood as a personal investigation, but as true research.[257]

For some time, existentialism has applied its categories to the interpretation of the Platonic dialogue. I refer to E. Grassi, K. Jaspers and Hans Gadamer. Grassi (Heidegger's colleague for a few years in Munich), in his above-mentioned volume *Il problema della metafisica platonica* (Bari 1932), states that the dialogue is an intrinsic element for philosophy, insofar as Plato's truth (or "eîdos") does not express an objective, abstract truth, but is reduced to a problem, or a "terminal paradox and open topic". In the *Meno*, the terminus of the inquiry ("péras") only indicates that the dialogue is not finished, as is the case with every truth. Being and truth are "defined", and metaphysics is the ontology of the finite (pp. 70 – 72). Therefore, the dialogue possesses an external morphology, but its structure is an open apory; in this way we can understand the ignorance of the *Apology* and the sense of marvel in the *Theaethetus* (*Ibid.*, pp. 83 – 84). There is no truth outside of the view of the speakers! Jaspers states: "the Platonic dialogues do not express the communication of any existence but the dialectic structure of thought".[258]

Gadamer states that Socrates' "docta ignorantia" is merely the openness of the subject, who through questions opens the passage to wisdom. Questions and answers continue indefinitely, but the question always has primacy. The question is false when it implies closure; it is true when it continues and hence when it manifests the limits of the questioner.[259]

What can we say about this interpretation? It is clear that we are faced here with a requisition, as we have stated above; that of bringing Plato over to the cause of existentialism and historicism, which goes against Plato's texts and classical tradition.

As Aristotle himself states, the *Republic*, *Politicus* and *Laws* are not theoretical writings, but programmatic writings (*Phy.* II, 3, 194 b 17). As Ingemar Düring states (*Aristoteles*, translated into Italian, Milan 1976, p. 13), these discourses contain a doctrine to be taught, not a doctrine to be discussed.

3. *Language as a Sign of Platonic Evolution*

Another exterior element which shows us the progressive spirit of Platonic thought is his philosophical language. Plato abhorred the idolatry of formulas, since the word is only an imperfect instrument of thought. Diogenes Laërtius already noted that he "adopted various terms, so that ignorants were not given the opportunity to embrace the thought of all the work" (Diogenes Laërtius III, 63). This is exemplified by the word "sophia", which can mean "the science of intelligible and the real", or philosophy, or experience (*ibid.*).

In this reform of philosophical vocabulary, we see the response which Socrates had already begun against Sophistic rhetoric, which tended to crystallise the meaning of words through a minute analysis of etymology, synonyms, pronunciation, etc. However, Plato went further: having discovered the idea, he realised the enormous distance between reality and word.[260] Hence we see the origin of his mobile, flexible and restless lexicon. For example, participation is expressed with "koinonía", "méthexis", "parousía", "prosgígnesthai" and "epieînai", while matter is called "tópos", "chóra", "hédra", "ápeiron", "anánke" and "eimarméne".

It seems that Plato, having gone beyond the limits of the word, intuited the abyss between the word itself and reality; hence he found difficulty in finding the most suitable words.

The flexibility of his vocabulary has another side: the variation in meaning of individual philosophical terms. For example, the word "doxa" (which in principle is opposed to the "epistéme", or science) has a different meaning in the *Meno*, the *Republic* and the *Theaethetus*. The ambiguity rests in the fact that sometimes it indicates a simple pre-predicative perception, while at other times it indicates an authentic judgement. According to Yvon Lafrance, the contradictions are significant in: a) *Republic* V, 478 a 12–13 and *Meno* 85 c 9–12. In the first dialogue, the "doxa" refers to ontology, while in the *Meno* it has a geometric meaning, because here its *object* is mathematical and geometric sciences; b) between *Meno* 97 a–c and *Republic* V, 477 e 7–8, in that the "doxa" produces different effects. In the first dialogue it is not infallible and becomes stable only if it possesses an "aitías logismós" (98 a), or rational analysis; in the latter, since its object is the sensible world, it can only become infallible on the level of action and art; c) *Meno* 98 a 3–4 and *Theaethetus* 201 c 8 d 3: in the first dialogue, the "doxa" becomes infallible through the "aitías logismós", while in the latter it can never be elevated to the dignity of science, even through the "logos" (*Methode et exégèse en histoire de la philosophie*, Montreal-Paris 1983, pp. 46–77, cfr. N. Gulley, *Plato's Theory of Knowledge*, London 1982, pp. 14–15).

However, at this point we are faced with an elegant discussion affecting our entire vision of the Athenian master's philosophy. Already in the *Phaedrus* (around 370 B.C.), Plato, after having discussed the myth of the Egyptian god Theut, the inventor of human language, exclaimed: "If someone believes to have put in writing a theory or method of his, and if someone receives these while claiming that, insofar as they have been put in writing, they constitute a clear and defined possession; then both people show themselves to be very ingenuous and ignorant of Ammon's prophetic words. In reality, they ignore the fact that writing can only refresh the memory of things which are already known" (275 a–b, translated by Turolla, Milan 1954). It is obvious that here Plato establishes a difference not only between reality and the word, but also between the oral and the written word, between speaking and writing. Hence arises the disturbing problem: do the writings that we have of Plato's represent his true doctrine, his oral message? Another problem: in the seventh letter, he repeats: "In reality, a work based on my work does not exist and will never exist. It is a fact; these are arguments which cannot be communicated in any way, as is the case with other doctrines" (341 c-d – translated by Turolla, op. cit., p. 811).

From these statements some researchers have attempted to give a sense to Aristotle's mysterious phrase, when the latter refers to Plato's "ágrapha dógmata", the doctrines he did not write down, and which are thus different from those in his dialogues. Plato's "non-written" doctrines have been discussed for two centuries: from Tenneman to Hegel, from Robin (*La théorie des idées et des nombres d'après Aristote*, Paris 1908) to Stenzel (1924), from Marino Gentile (1930) to Cherniss (1962). In more recent times scholars have become even more fervid (and, I would add, punctilious), especially those of the Tübingen school, where Prof. Hans Krämer and his disciples have studied the problem for over thirty years.[261]

According to the most reasonable conclusions, Plato, near the end of his life, adopted Pythagorean doctrines which completed the ideas expressed in the Republic, in particular in the treatises on the Idea of Good. The two ultimate foundations of the older Plato were the One and the Dyad (great and small), which are before being and before all categories. The number-ideas (One and Dyad) would be the prelude to Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and Plotinus' One.[262]

Whatever the results of this dispute may be, it remains true that in Plato, language is an exterior sign and verbal expression of interior toil, albeit incomplete and flexible. However, he is not its victim, but its judge.[263]

4. *The Philosophical Method and the Evolution of Platonic Thought*

A third element outlining the progressive development of Plato's thought is the method. This element is different from the others; while the first two are revealing signs, the method is an internal, constituent element. Obviously, the problem is not relevant for the Socratic period and the ten corresponding dialogues, but only for those which regard Plato either in search of the idea (ascending dialectic method) or in the phase of critical re-examination of the doctrine of ideas (descending dialectic method). The former method is visible from the *Meno* till the *Phaedrus*. This is the moment in which Plato exalts himself before the contemplation of the achieved idea (Beauty in the *Symposium*, Good in the *Republic*, divine madness in the *Phaedrus*). From *Parmenides* through the end of his dialogues, he enters inside the beauty of the contemplated idea and studies its parts, divides it, sections it and applies it to the inferior parts. These are the minor and major descending dialectics, as we will soon describe.[264]

Ascending dialectics prevail in the dialogues following the Socratic ones and are distinguished in their scientific method and by vague descending procedures[265] which sometimes appear in them.

In this phase of his thought Plato went through a purifying process ("lysis", "prooímion", *Republic* 532 a) and directly contemplated the ideas; hence the descending dialectics consist more of the precepts presented as preludes than an indication of the surprise appearance of the idea. For example, in the Republic it is declared that the steps upward (called "epibáseis" in the *Symposium*) lead to the vestibule of being, or the "principle which does not have hypothesis" (511 b).

Following are some mentions in individual post-Socratic dialogues. There is a "way" (*Phaedo*, 100 b), an "ascent"("anábasis, "epánodos") toward the ideas, called "e dialektikè méthodos móne" (*Republic* 533 c). or also "the other method" (*Phaedo* 97 b), a "mode of navigation" (*Phaedo* 99 b). In the *Phaedo*, this anagogical method ends with "hypotheses" ("approximate truth"). The first hypothesis is: empirical or scientific demonstrations are discarded (97 a b). The second hypothesis, illustrated through Anaxagoras' philosophy: there is a cause, "tò áriston kaì béltiston" (99 d 2). The third hypothesis is: neither the sciences (with their material causes) nor Anaxagoras (with his efficient cause) suffice. One must take recourse to the "'logoi' to find the truth of beings in them" (99 e). The failure of these procedures leads to the existent essence of the cause, which is final (99 b); this is the most solid ("béltiste") "hypothesis", and the "logoi" which follow are Good in itself, Beauty in itself, Greatness in itself, etc. (100 b). Only in the "'logoi' does the philosopher consider existent things" (99 e).

It is necessary to observe here that this final philosophical hypothesis is ascending, and not descending; the descending method is shown in Plato's scientific method and in the postulates of modern sciences. His method is not logical, but ontological, because it is based on the existence of an all-inclusive idea. Therefore, Plato calls the terminus of the ascent "the non-hypothetical principle" ("archè anypóthetos"), which is realised in an intuition of reality[266] surpassing all certainty.

In the *Symposium*, the ascending method finds its highest expression in the story of the priestess Diothyma. There are preparatory steps to reaching the contemplation of beauty in itself. The soul uses this glorious program through an aesthetic education (the beauty of a face, of many faces) in order to be transfigured into a mystical (not rational, as in the *Phaedo*) initiation through a spiritual voyage to the regions of human creatures' spiritual beauty (of a soul, many souls, institutions). At the end of this symbolic voyage, "suddenly" ("exaíphnes"; cfr. also the seventh letter, 341 d) a glimmer of being invests the soul and makes it vibrate with emotion ("aeì òn monoeidès, autò tò kalòn . . . katharòn . . ." –211 ff.). To review: a vision of being ("orônti oî horatòn tò kalòn –

Symposium 211 a ff.), a nostalgia for being ("horégetai tôu ontos", *Phaedo* 86 d), unveiling of being ("katàdelon autêî psycheî gìgnetai tì tôn ònton"–*Phaedrus* 65 c).

Therefore, ascending dialectics are infra-metaphysical in their movement; in their terminus, they are a beatific silence and contemplation.

In the *Republic*, ascending dialectics refers to the grandioseness of the solar myth and the myth of the cavern. Behind these two imaginary Platonic references lies the Platonic doctrine of the "mégiston màthema" (504 d), or philosophy as the supreme apex of wisdom reached through an ascending purificational program of the sciences. The sciences are arrested in their ascent by sensible experience, with its geometric figures, numbers and movement. "Supreme knowledge" terminates at being through "hypotheses", which serve as "points of support for the elevation to the principle" (511 b). Hypotheses are transfigured during the push toward the principle ("arché"), which is the undoubtable and unconditioned, ontological and logical "first" ("anhypóthetos"). As one sees all the visible cosmos when looking at the sun, so one sees being and truth when he has seen the idea of Good (509 b).

This ascending and intuitive method also appears in the first part of the *Phaedrus*: souls must overcome opinion ("dóxa") and arrive at being ("synagogé"), nourishing themselves with the bread of being and contemplating the ideas "visible to the mind" (247 c).

To review, the intuitive character of the ascending dialectic method is a vision of the soul (*Phaedo*, *Republic*: "proeidénai"; *Phaedo* 74 e: "katideîn"; "theásasthai", *Republic* 516; "horâsthai, *Ibid.*, 517), a joining with being ("migeîs toî ònti" – *Republic* 490 b), a capturing ("hàpsasthai"), a vision of truth ("ideîn autò tò alethés", *Republic* 533), an intuition of being (532 b), an initiation ("myesis"). It is debated whether Plato was mystical or rational in his terminus (Festugière), or rational in the principle of supreme science (Lafrance).

The means or ways for this intuition of the idea are: death

(*Phaedo*), reminiscence (*Meno*, *Phaedo*), aesthetic initiation (*Symposium*), the sciences (*Republic*), and reincarnation and religious initiation (*Phaedrus*).

5. *Descending Dialectics, the Constituent Movement of Platonic Philosophy*

The paradox of the ascending dialectic method rests in the fact that as soon as the idea shines in the mind, then philosophical longing is placated and research ceases. Therefore, the "prelude", the way leading to the idea, is dialectic, but the idea itself is not. The idea is omnipresent and cannot be broken down.

However, Plato was not satisfied after *Phaedrus* and the *Republic* with his stupendous contemplation. He asked himself: is it intuitive act, or also reason and investigative process? Is the idea one or many? What relation exists between the idea and inferior reality?

Plato gives only an imperfect response to these questions using what we call minor descending dialectics (designated in the texts with the Greek word "diairesis" "partitioning art"), and a perfect response using what we call major descending "synoptic" dialectics, which Plato calls "metretics" in his mature dialogues. This latter term indicates a science of measure and distance between the ideas themselves and ideas and things.

The two dialectics are "interdependent" (*Phaedrus* 284 d) in that the former represents an initial empirical access (of a Socratic type) to the critical problem of the ideas.[267] If sometimes the "diairesis" is introduced after the major dialectics, then it takes on the task of exemplification, almost as if logic were the mirror of ontology and that the predication is the gnoseological bond imitating the objective participation of the ideas with each other and with inferior reality. Hence, in the *Politicus* it is stated that the "diairesis" does not differ much from myth (286 b).

In particular, the "diairesis" consists of the degradation of the intuitive method, having as its subject not reality, but words. This is shown, for example, in the rhetorical division of the *Phaedrus* (270 b), the seven classifications in *Sophistes* (see below, number 120), the partitioning of art in *Politicus* (277 b), etc.

Sometimes Plato unites the word "diairesis" with "induction" ("synagogé") to indicate that in dismantling the meaning of words, one proceeds according to experience and hence according to a vulgar knowledge.

The true descending method, which is major and dialectic, has an ontological character. It begins in the *Parmenides*, with the goal of studying the problem of the One and the Many. This is no longer an intuition ("nóesis"), but a reflection ("diánoia") on the idea (143 a). It is an "internal mental passage to the ideas themselves" ("dià pánton diéxodos" – 136 e) which implies "a fatiguing exercise" ("pragmatióde paid á" – 137 d). Hence the idea no longer appears as a monolithic reality, but as something that can be captured according to common categories ("éide") both as intelligibles and as real things.[268]

In the Theaethetus, this reflexive thought ("psyché", 186 a) discovers common aspects ("koiná") in all things, through a process which is a prelude for Aristotelian abstraction. In *Sophistes* this procedure is based on the "koinonía tôn genôn", the purely intelligible notions common to the intelligible and sensible reality. These notions must not be considered as pure relations, but as modes of being for the idea ("mégista géne").

This method of analysing the idea and its content is also applied in *Politicus*, *Philebus* and *Timaeus*. Philosophy is a universal "metretics", the study of the modes in which an idea is realised through measures and various distances from the sensible world.

6. *Myth and Logos as an Evolutionary Element of the Philosophical Act*

If the dialectic method reveals Plato's development through time (387 to 361 B.C.), then the intermingling (or "diallelum") between myth and logos reveals an *internal development of the act of philosophising itself*. Therefore, while method can be determined as a sign of development through certain eras or stages, the intermingling remains throughout Plato's life and activity, because it touches the relation between intuitive-symbolic knowledge and conceptual knowledge and reveals his intimate interior struggle. This is visible not only within the individual dialogues, but in the entire inquisitive process of truth. Hence, a single dialogue (for example, the *Republic*) can maintain an ascending dialectic method while availing itself of various myths or symbols.

It is this alternation of myth and logos which give the Platonic dialogues a dramatic dynamism, their variety of language, and an exceptional thrust and access to truth.[269]

We find our first example in the *Phaedo*, when Cebetes, after having demonstrated that the soul is immortal "ex contrariis" and "ex reminiscentia", exclaims: "Persuade us of this, O Socrates . . . as people who are fearful; or better, are we not those who fear, and is there not in us a child who allows himself to be possessed by these great fears? Seek to persuade him and do not fear death and sorceresses" (77 e).[270] Reason and faith, philosophy and mysticism (or, in Christian language, "fides quaerens intellectum"),[271] as A. Guzzo states, are the energies supporting Plato throughout his difficult research on the soul's immortality.[272] His is an attempt to placate the existence of religious convictions when faced with the problem of death, with spells ("epaídein") or demonstrative reasons ("lógoi kaloí") given that the two preceding arguments "ex contrariis" and "ex reminiscentia" are based on religious faith.

The comfort of religious faith cannot fully satisfy the restlessness of the soul, which requests the spell of reasonings ("lógoi"), the "magical ode" which soothes the youth. Therefore, there are two spells: one of faith and the other of reason. Only the "misologians" can negate the power of thought (88 c, 91 c); the wise invoke this power. Since demonstrative thought does not show with full certainty that truth is really as it results from apodictic process, one again turns to faith, the object of which "is not the probable" (114 d), but a certain truth; hence "it is worthy to believe in the reality of immortal life". At this point, Plato announces the beauty of this certainty: it is a risk ("kalòs kyndynos"), and hence "it is appropriate that these certainties cast their spell on us" (114 c, d). However, the encounter of faith and reason does not appear in Gorgias' tragic philosophy. Plato, above and beyond the insufficiency of the two reasons, perceives "a second navigation" ("deúteros ploûs"), which is like a divine revelation ("theîos lógos", 85 d) placing an end to every hesitation.

This encounter of myth and "logos" appears in almost all of Plato's dialogues: in the Socratic dialogue *Ion*, when he discusses the difference between false art and art inspired by "divine fate" ("theîa moîra"), and in *Meno* regarding the solid virtue as a "divine gift" (99 e – "áneu noû") infused from above and artificial virtue. In Gorgias, after having recounted the *myth of the nude souls* Socrates states: "... these recountings could be disregarded, but it would then be necessary that, by searching everywhere, we find motives and reasons better than these" (527 a).

In the *Phaedrus*, Plato admits that man can make contact with the gods through four kinds of divine madness: prophetic, sacerdotal, poetic and philosophical (249 e). In the *Philebus*, he repeats that dialectics can be reduced to divine inspiration: "A gift of the gods to men ... was one day sent to us down here from the divine kingdom by means of some Prometheus" (16 a). From the *Phaedrus*: "If I did not have faith, then I would not be the strange man I am ... if one begins to not have faith in all these [mythical] personages, and if all were to proceed according to reasons of probability, then oh, one would have to spend a great deal of time studying that wild science" (229 d–e).

However, having admitted the considerable presence of myth in Plato, we have a problem touching his intimate structure. This use of myth should not be seen only as a *literary value*. It interrupts the questions and answers of the dialogues, makes the discourse more poetic, blocks rigorous argumentation, takes recourse to the imagination and lets thought rest. In this form of art, Plato is an able artist.

The problem arises when we consider the philosophical value or meaning of myth. Let us begin with a summary description of his myths, which are ordinarily divided into three groups:[273] a) *Socratic-Sophistic myths*, which have an anthropological character, such as the myth of Prometheus in *Protagoras*; b) *Socratic and pre-Socratic myths* bound together, such as those recounted by Agathon' Pausanias, Aristophanes on Eros, and the Socratic allegory of Eros, son of Poroŝ and Penias (*Symposium*); c) *cosmic and eschatological myths*, such as the myth of the soul or charioteer in the *Phaedrus*, or the three minor myths of the cicadas, of Boreas and of Teuth; the Myth of Atlantis (*Critias* and *Timaeus*), the myth of Chronos' divine governance (*Politicus*). Other minor myths can be categorised in the three groups above, such as the myth of the fish (Phaedo 109 – 110), which anticipates the arrival of the myth of the cavern; the myth of Glaucus, the marine god covered with sea-shells and crusts, an image of the soul within the body (*Republic* X, 611 c), etc.

Scholars have expressed various opinions about these myths. The principal interpretations are: a) the myth is a poetic digression without philosophical content (Hegel, Zeller), and is thus a literary word-play (Couturat); b) the myth is a useless wrapper for the philosophical thought, because it really involves the logos (Grassi) or even a deceptive literary superstructure (Teichmüller);[274] c) we should distinguish between allegories and myth. The allegory is a rationalistic interpretation of myth; without the allegories, the myth remains on an inferior pre-philosophical level. Therefore, the allegorical Plato is a philosopher; he is not a philosopher when he narrates myths (Stewart).[275]

We answer first of all that the *allegory* was recognised by Plato, after Socrates, but for sober ethical reasons (Republic 378 d). However, he guards against extensive use of "hypónoia" because this could lead to atheism. Therefore, Stewart's thesis is not acceptable;[276] the truth is that Plato rarely allegorised myths. Indeed, he had a very high opinion of myths (as we have already partially documented). Therefore, he is also a philosopher when he recounts myths, even when he does not allegorise them.

Second, we must distinguish the myth from the symbol. For example, the visible sun is used as a symbol of the invisible sun of Good. Plato took recourse in the symbol or metaphor, but not in opposition to myth. In fact, the symbol is but the mediated expression of the myth and both alternate exercising the expressive and comprehensive function of the single cognitive structure. There is an understanding of the myth's truth without need of symbols (this is the immediate comprehension of truth), and there is an understanding of the myth's truth through the symbol (through a figurative or metaphorical mediation).[277] However, Plato, in harmony with Greek tradition, prefers the myth to the symbol.[278]

The problem then becomes the myth, which for Plato is a complementary cognitive form, together with the "logos". The myth seeks the "logos" and the "logos" seeks the myth. Indeed, the myth is a "logos" (*Gorgias* 523 a, 526 b), and hence "he who loves myths is philosopher in a certain sense" ("ho philomythos philosophòs pôs esti" – *Ibid.*) Myths "are also expressions of truth" (Republic 377 a). If Plato prefers the language of mythology to the mythology of language (as L. Stefanini aptly stated), then this is due to his being an authentic philosopher.[279]

CHAPTER FIVE

FROM RHETORICS TO THE IDEA

1. *From Socrates and Rhetorics to the Discovery of the Idea*

Plato undoubtedly underwent the influence of philosophers before Socrates; through Cratylus, he surely became acquainted with Heraclitus. The figure of Democritus is debated; some scholars maintain that the concepts of "element", "prime", "invisible" and "one" were taken from the Atomist master.[280] However, today some claim that these concepts were already present in philosophical circles. Regarding the Pythagoreans, the insistence of the sources (quoted by Diogenes Laërtius) leads us to believe that he adopted quite a bit of their thought. The episode we mentioned above, where Plato purchased a work by Philolaus for 80 talents (Diogenes Laërtius III, 1, 11), even if it is an envious fabrication, remains significant. At any rate, the dialogues from *Philebus* through *Timaeus* attest to the noticeable presence of Pythagoreanism. No less noticeable is the Eleatic doctrine, which was filtered through Hermogenes and Plato's Italian contacts.

Two other philosophers fascinated Plato: Anaxagoras and Diogenes of Apollonia. The hypothesis advanced by Willy Theiler, today shared by many researchers, is that Plato did not recognise in Anaxagoras' "noûs" the cosmic finalistic force that Socrates had so insistently taught. Therefore, it seems plausible to state that it was Diogenes of Apollonia who created a climate favourable to the determination of the final cause. This was done through the analogy between biological finalism and cosmic finalism. This discovery was publicised in the fourth and fifth centuries and can be found in Euripides, Xenophon and Socrates, and later in Plato and Aristotle. Plato went beyond contemporary teaching by entrusting to the soul not only the principle of movement (*Phaedrus*), but also the principle of order (*Timaeus*).[281]

As we can see, the passage from cosmology to anthropology was shown in the following ascending trajectory: Anaxagoras, Diogenes of Apollonia, Socrates, and Plato with his philosophy of the soul and the principle of teleology. However, Socrates' teaching influenced Plato's philosophical orientation in other areas as well. In politics, Socrates left no direct trace; he was a cultivator of Athenian politics, but the opinion is unanimous that he did not profess particular political theories. Still, there remained the unshaken moral principles; and hence the ideal State (Republic, Politicus, Laws) is also due to Socratic ethics, as Fritz stated.[282]

Today historians ask themselves to what degree this was true. Some declare that this was a "*deepening*", or a research of the presuppositions where Socrates had remained reticent or mute (the ideas, cosmological problems, politics, psychology, etc.).[283] Others speak of "*ricovery*" (Grassi) and of a "*gradual evolution*" (especially in politics-*Republic* I).[284] T. Gomperz holds that Plato's works were a "*revision*".[285] Instead, Ryle states that Plato experienced a *passage* from a critical philosophy to a more professional philosophy.[286]

The formulas may vary, but there can be no doubt of Plato's surpassing Socratic ethics through dialectics. He was aware of the fact that politics (Plato's specific vocation) without metaphysics would be a useless task. In his seventh letter we read these concise words: "In short, I was inexorably led to value good philosophy and to conclude that only from this good philosophy is it possible to hope for a just day in State politics and justice in citizens' lives" (326 a-b). If we agree with P. Friedlander (and it seems indubitable) that Plato did not feel the calling to philosophy, but to politics, when he was young,[287] then we can postulate that in Plato there is a *development in form and in matter. The progress in form was that Socratic agreement, modified by Eleatic and Pythagorean philosophy, was transformed into the idea. In matter, Socratic morals became transformed into politics.* Therefore, the simple "conceptual ethics" of Socrates were substituted by the "political ideal" of Plato; and the "agreement of the ethos" was replaced by the "ideology of the polis". This also permits us to partially evaluate Socrates' material or formal influence in various dialogues. The *Republic* seems to be dominated by Socratic attraction more than by the Eleatic ideal. *Parmenides*, *Theaethetus* and *Sophistes* offer themes concerning the ideal Eleatic formality. *Politicus*, *Philebus* and *Timaeus* represent the synthesis of these two elements.

However, Plato would probably not have arrived at the idea if he would not have first taken Sophistic rhetorics into consideration. In this area, there are two significant dialogues: one turned to the past, arguing against the inane nature of rhetorical artifices (*Gorgias*); the other turned to the future, with an analysis of language (the Sophists' conceited occupation) leading to the ideas (*Cratylus*).[288]

It is true that his attack on rhetorics had already begun earlier, in the *Protagoras* and *Euthydemus*; the Sophists "pastime", he observed, "does not regard the true or the false, but oratory correctness or incorrectness" (286 a–b). The folly of this decadent art (ironically called "Royal") was to transform the orthoepy of Protagoras into a factory of heroes of babbling, exemplified by the two brothers Dionisodorus and Euthydemus.[289] Still, it was in the *Gorgias* that he threw down the gauntlet.[290] This debate is articulated in three colloquies: Gorgias-Socrates, Socrates-Polus, and Socrates-Callicles, and strikes at three categories dear to the Sophists: subjective persuasion, deception and violence. *Subjective persuasion* is the Sophistic art of making a delinquent pass for a just man. However, justice does not reside in the words of false judges, but in life. For man, evil is not to suffer injustice, but to commit injustice (454 b, 455). *Deception* is the fawning practice (463 b) which turns rhetorics into an art for the body, like the culinary arts.

Deception soothes the soul, but it persuades only the ignorant. It is not illuminated by ethical principles and does not seek "that great good which is truth as such". *Violence* is the perverse privilege of the super-man, whose law is the primacy of the instinct, of force ("physis") over the moral and juridical order ("nómos", 492). It is like a bottomless barrel, an insatiable will for power.[291]

True rhetoric has discipline and law as its goal, with the ultimate goal of the soul's moral perfection. This is the philosophy which promotes justice in life and serenely supports the judgement of the judges of Hades (myth of the nude souls).

After the *Gorgias* comes the *Cratylus*, which marks a critical reconsideration of rhetorics. It does not suffice to consider rhetorics as a grammatical connection and a set of oratory precepts, but above all as a logical-metaphysical task. In this dialogue Socrates, Hermogenes and Cratylus speak. Hermogenes, faithful to Eleatic canons, rejects the value of the word as a vehicle of truth or as a reflection of thought and being. On the contrary, Cratylus, in agreeing with Heraclitus' philosophy of becoming, states that every phenomenon has a single corresponding word. Socrates represents the reform of the threefold step: being, thinking, saying. Hence being is expressed in thought and thought is expressed in language, and the word remains a vehicle, albeit imperfect, of being.

Socrates (or Plato) thus rejects the two extreme theses of the other two participants.

Hermogenes' first thesis held that there is no relation between being and word. Human language is conventional ("nómos"); and hence there is no word for the thought of being, just as there is no thought for the word "being". Plato responded: one gives arbitrary names, such as proper names and the numbers. But even these, when examined, basically express "what exists in nature, having a perennial existence" (397 b). As a proof, Plato used the validity of 80 etymologies; the etymology is based on the fundamental assumption that words are not only "demonstrative" (indicative) and in a certain sense "onomatopoeic" ("mimetic"), but above all that they signify being (432–434).[292]

Cratylus' second thesis made language man's free creation, a true human "poetry" irrelevant to the material nature of things. The word does not signify things, but only indicates them. He who knows names does not know things, because the word is not "eikón", but "semeîon". Therefore, the only access to knowledge is limited to the word, which designates or indicates but does not express. Plato responded: it is true that the word is a human creation, but it is regulated by things. Without falling into the thesis of the absolute correspondence between word and thing (as in the case of onomatopoeia), the word remains a vehicle of truth: "hos àn onòmata epístetai, epístasthai kaì tà prágmata" (435 a).[293] Therefore, we strive not only for words, but also "for the beauty which is in itself, which always has a being equal to itself" (439 d).[294]

2. *The First Steps of Platonic Ontology Toward the Idea*

Having overcome the problems of rhetoric, Plato soon passes to the discovery of the ideas, even if he had already foreseen these in his polemics against the Sophists. The first dialogue to signal this passage is certainly the *Meno*, whose theme on the capacity to teach political virtue is discussed by Socrates, Meno the Thessalian, a disciple of Gorgias, a servant, and Anitus, one of Socrates' accusers. The subject is developed as follows: if virtue consists of a certain knowledge ("máthema"), in a stable mental disposition of the soul and not in biological instinct, then it can have three origins: a) the teaching of a disciple by a master (or science – "episteme"); b) through reminiscence ("anámnesis"), reawakening in the soul what it had contemplated before entering the body. Socrates demonstrates the validity of knowledge through "anámnesis" using his gracious dialogue with the servant, who managed to understand a difficult geometric problem and its demonstration. Here we find the reminder of maieutics, of the blow struck by the "torpedo", of metempsychosis, of the immortality of the soul and the limitations of the "doxa"; c) through inspiration.

where man, through a "divine gift" ("theîa moîra") possesses the virtue "without the mind which possesses it having perception of it" (99 e). This presupposes that the soul is divine. Plato explained: "Therefore, if in the soul there always resides the truth of being ("alétheia tôn ónton"), then the soul is immortal" (86 b). Therefore, reminiscence is not a problematic conscience, but a fundamental possession of the soul's truth" (81 c).[295] This truth is then confronted by empirical knowledge ("I go to seek what is above these individual objects", 75 a), even if these objects have "an extraordinary value" (97 a).

Alongside the *Meno* lies the *Phaedo*, which develops its discussion in three directions: one historical, in the celebration of Socrates' heroic death; another anthropological, in the philosophical demonstration of the soul's immortality; and a third, a systemisation of the doctrine of ideas. We will not tarry on the literary and poetic merits of this dialogue. Plato used the highest form of poetry to describe the most dramatic episode in the history of ancient history, Socrates' last hours and death.

Regarding the two philosophical aspects (immortality of the soul and existence of the ideas), we must immediately observe that this is a single presentation transforming Socrates' "religion of the soul" into Plato's "philosophy of immortality"[296] through the doctrine of ideas. The central argument is this: the soul is "similar" ("syngenés") to the ideas; but, the ideas are immortal and exist in themselves; therefore, the soul is immortal.[297] The major premise of the syllogism is demonstrated by the fact that man, and only man, can form universal ideas (the great in itself, smallness in itself, etc.). The minor premise is the central point of Platonic ontology; this is the "second navigation" which inaugurated the decisive progression of his thought.

The proof that the idea is real, albeit non-material, is the following: the idea exists in itself, as the soul exists before uniting with the body. Therefore, not only is the idea gnoseologically accessible to the soul that knows it ("eîdos") as being independent of the senses and an essence, but it is also existence and reality.

"Eidos" hence means something super-sensible, the object of thought; "ousia" indicates existence. The idea is both of these things. The most important texts concerning this are 75 c–d; 78 d, and 92 d. The "eidos" is that which is ("toû hò esti"), or "ousia". In reference to the idea, we can thus state that "every thing that is, possesses being" ("autò hékaston ho esti tò ón"). As "ousia", the idea is "what it is" ("ousia échousa tèn toû 'hò estin' "). Therefore, to this type of idea "we give the title of being" (78 d).[298]

Just as the ideas exist in themselves, so the soul exists; " . . . it possesses an existence ("ousia") insofar as it has a relation with that which has the name of 'that which is', with the idea-existence" (92 d). It follows that the ideas are intuited ("noêin) by the reminiscent soul, and terrestrial life is "meléthe thanátou", or a "meditation of death".

After the *Phaedo*, Plato-almost as if he were passing from a tragedy to a comedy (Wilamowitz-Möllendorf) gives us, in his *Symposium*, a less tormented-indeed, a serene-vision of the Idea. From a celebration of death ("meléthe thanátou") Plato raises himself up "on the right way" (211 c) to a contemplation "of the beauty that exists in Being" (211 c), a single idea worthy of a single great vision ("monoeidés").[299] With a wise literary artifice, he has the priestess Diothyma of Mantinea narrate the myth of "Eros", of "the love of love" (199 d).[300] He is a semi-god, son of Poros (talent) and Penia (poverty). Insofar as he is "poor", he does not possess wisdom; and he is restless ("aporia"). Only the gods possess all wisdom in act; he "loves wisdom" but is ignorant. However, insofar as he is a talented son, he loves research: love is by nature a 'philosopher" (204 b);[301] it possesses the science of love, or "erotica", which is a "perfect and supreme initiation at whose terminus rests the final vision" (210 e). This is wisdom "without envy" ("áphtonos", 210 d), which crosses the "scale" of five ascending steps of discovery: a) the physical beauty of one face; b) of two or more faces; c) the spiritual beauty of a soul; d) of many souls and their effects, such as laws, customs and civic virtues; e) the beauty of the sciences, with which one is introduced to the Absolute. This program is obligatory, because the "poverty" of one beauty pushes the researcher to the higher beauty through an "exaltation" ("manía") or "trembling" ("phríké", as the *Phaedrus* says), as the effect of an inherent energy of the soul, or "demon" ("daìmon") which assists ("synergón") and presents in nostalgic form the amorous terminus of beauty. This happens when "suddenly" ("exaìphnes") one reaches "the goal of all the preceding fatiguing exercises" (210 e), the light which emanates from Beauty:

> It always is, does not become, does not perish, does not grow . . . it is neither a discourse, nor a cognition ["oúte lógos oúte epitésteme"]. It does not exist in some other thing; not in living beings, not on earth, not in the heavens, not in any other element. This is Beauty by itself and for itself in its being, with a single aspect for all eternity. Instead, all other beautiful things, all these things participate in the single Beauty in some mysterious way . . . Man has reached the terminus, he knows beauty in its essence, the beauty that exists in being (21 a–c)

Agreeing with Zeller, we may comment on the famous passage by stating that the "eros" is not a mode of thought (as Robin believed), but only an energy of thought, an initially confused inspiration and a vehement tension in the process of ascent. Hence the contemplating subject is not the "éros", but the soul. Second, the ascending method is attributed to the soul, not to the "eros". Therefore, it is not (as Robin stated) pre-logical and empirical, but an intellectual-volitive movement ("philosophia") toward Beauty. Third, we may state with Stenzel that at the beginning the urge comes from empirical knowledge ("doxa"), which has a pluriform object ("polyeidés"),[302] but within an urge toward the ideal vibrates.

Therefore, Beauty is a "theîon" and an "arché" which emerges above all beautiful things. Indeed, beautiful things participate ("metéchein") in the sovereign beauty. And so, it is transcendent.[303] In short, here we have "in nuce" all the elements of a great metaphysics and gnoseology, based on the highest anthropology: man, attracted by the "divinum" can enter the "aeternum".

3. *The Republic: The First Great Platonic Synthesis*:

It is commonly believed that Plato wrote the *Republic* after *Symposium*, shortly before his second voyage to Sicily (367 B.C.). This progression is based on the fact that while in the *Symposium* Plato stresses the way of affirmation in his ascent, explaining the value of the five individual steps of ascent, in the *Republic* the ways of ascent are overshadowed by the apex itself.

Externally, the dialogue seems to fulfil the "ideal politics" and is a completion of Socrates "conceptual ethics" (see above Part III, Ch. V, no. 1). However, the subject of politics begins a spiraling movement through all the themes mentioned in previous dialogues: art, morals, education, psychology, history, eschatology, anthropology, metaphysics and science. The *Republic* hence represents a first synthesis, albeit temporary, of the larger picture of Platonic philosophy.[304] It responds to the great question of his philosophy: what use is wisdom if it does not lead to Good? On the other hand, what is Good, if not the highest form of wisdom? We read this explicitly in one passage: "What does it help man to be able to conceive every science and every virtue while abstracting from Good?" (505 b).

Therefore, the highest form of good is government, the highest level of wisdom. There can be no justice in anyone who is not a philosopher. In this fashion the "ousía" of *Phaedo* (as the existence of the idea) and the "kalón" of the *Symposium* are joined in the Good (Tò Agathón), which is absolutely intelligible. This is the highest metaphysics, or – as Plato said – the "mégiston máthema" which absorbed Plato in the immense framework of this dialogue.

Plato begins to describe this metaphysics in Book V, in the third "tempestuous wave" (472 a), where he confronts the formation of the philosopher-politician; he continues with his explanations in Books VI and VII.

Not all are called to govern. There are two supreme categories among men: the "curious" ("philotheámones" and "philékooi"), those who live only to look and listen. Theirs are external lives of the senses; then there are the "spectators of wisdom", the philosophers. The curious man is extroverted and superficial; the philosopher is a privileged soul ("eúcharis", 486 d) who has overcome ignorance and raised himself above the impressions of the "curious" (whose object is an intermediate being, between being and non-being) and reaches a knowledge of the total being ("pantelôs ón").[305] Therefore, the philosopher is like a slightly deaf and blind pilot, who may appear useless to society; and yet, the State should be entrusted to these people dedicated to thought (488 b 490).

At this point, Plato entrusts the exploration of the object of this philosophical thought to the solar myth, ending with the supreme idea of Good, which is also the super-being and the super-truth.[306]

The myth consists of a comparison between the four steps of a visible sun (sun, light, the human eye which is "sun-like", and visible objects) and the four categories of a invisible sun (Good, intellectual light, the human mind which is "good-like", and "idea-beings"). The visible sun is the symbol ("parádeigma"), an inferior "logos" referring to a superior "logos", so that the visible sun is the "very similar son" of Good. A seemingly limitless amount has been written about this myth; we shall limit ourselves to a few outlines, without pretending to exhaust the difficult exegetical problem.[307]

Good: Good rests above, "in power and majesty, being and truth" (509 b); hence it is "beyond existence" ("epékeina tês ousía", 509 b) even if it is "the most brilliant point of being" (508 a). Here we are faced with a complication: if Good is not "ousîa" (as Plato had stated in the *Phaedo*), then how can it be desirable? The contrast between existence and desirability has been noted by many scholars, such as Berger[308] and Rist.[309] Is it desirable because it is; or rather, *is* it because it is desirable? Plato seemed to have preferred desirability as a specific property belonging to Good's transcendence, as opposed to what Aristotle later stated. Plato probably returned to this solution not only for historical reasons of faithfulness to the Socratic ethics, but for his own reasons. Good is "cause" ("aitía pánton kalôn", 17 b); therefore, as the being in which others participate, it surpasses the value of the participants' being and truth without negating those beings. He stated this as follows: "Good grants science and truth; but it is transcended with beauty". Elsewhere, he wrote: "God in his simplicity revealed himself through his activity and his intellectual reasoning" (382 e). Therefore, Good is super-being and super-truth.

Intellectual Light: This light is the being radiated by Good; it is "existent truth" ("alétheia kaì ón"). *Being subsistent*, it possesses every fullness of being ("to eînai kaì tèn ousian"); *as a divine intellectual light*, it is the spatial sphere of the spirit, which makes intellectual vision possible for the human mind ("noûs"). It is not the super-being of Good ("He who among beings is most perfect" – 532 c), nor apophatic existence, but a being diffused in all things. Just as the visible sun does not have sight, but causes vision, so Good does not have being and truth, but causes them. Just as the visible sun allows becoming, generation and food, so Good makes reality intelligible, in that it gives light ("phôs paréchon"), and from Good comes being and existence.

Human Intelligence as Good-like mind: This is the human faculty to directly know "being and truth", without perceiving Good. Just as we cannot see the sun with eyes, so blinded are we by its splendour, so human intelligence, although it is in conformity with, "Good", or "Good like" it cannot capture Good. We read in one text: "Good communicates science and truth, but because of its splendour it is beyond those two things"; it is Father and King.

Individual Intelligible Existents: These are the four element of the great metaphysical framework; within the analogy of the visible sun, they correspond to the objects illuminated by the sun.

It is interesting to note that this myth inspired all the Platonic currents: from Plotinus (who saw the One in the Good) to Saint Augustine (who made the ideas derive from God by illumination), to Origen (who in his *Contra Celsum* quotes the metaphysics of the Good but fills in some of the gaps with the Christian "agápe"). Even Gioberti's ontologism and Rosmini's objective being seem to refer to some subjects taken from these admirable and mysterious Books VI and VII of the *Republic*.

Plato, not satisfied with just this myth, takes recourse to two other patterns or images to describe how the elect youth can be initiated into the "mégiston máthema": the allegory of the segment, and the myth of the cavern. Here the goal is no longer to illustrate the object but to describe the mode of this initiation. In Book III, Plato had already indicated the norms to impart the fundamental points to the young, which included physical education (gymnastics) and ethical-aesthetic formation (justice, wisdom, temperance, a pure Homeric religion, poetry, music textile art, etc.). At the age of 20 the youth would be introduced to the "five pulling sciences", which were those areas that purified sensory habits and gradually "awaken reflection" (524 d): arithmetic, plane geometry, stereometry, astronomy and harmony. Still, a formation limited to science would not allow the development of dialectics; one would have only a "dianoetic and cogitative knowledge" (511 d), a knowledge where all the concepts are mingled together with sensible images. Therefore, a "conversion of the soul" is necessary (518 c) in order to rid oneself of the remnants of the empirical world and to enter "the way of being" (520 c). The lower sciences are steps, hypotheses, points of support to reach the "principle of the universe without hypotheses" (511 b).

This process of cognitive ascent, which was reserved for adults over 35 years of age, is illustrated with the allegory of the segment.

The outlines of the visible and invisible worlds are aligned in the following illustration, brilliantly devised by Yvon Lafrance (op. cit., pp. 77–97):

VISIBLE WORLD				INVISIBLE WORLD
A Subject	D Images	C Conviction	E Mathematical Beings	B Intuitables
Subject	Conjecture (cikasía)	(pístis)	reason (diánoia)	(nóesis)

The segment AC expresses the "visible species", subdivided into AD, the portion of the reign of images (threefold category of images: shadows, reflexes of objects in water, statues or things). Therefore, the segment AC expresses the sensible world and its becoming, which generates a non-deceptive, non-coercive, imperfect knowledge of authentic reality. In this segment there are two types of knowledge, "conjecture" and "conviction", which can both be grouped under the term "doxa".

The impact with the segment CB begins with the scientific knowledge called "reason" ("diánoia"), which occurs within the five pulling sciences. The method is analytic and is based on five general and evident propositions, or axioms bound to the superior principle. However, the segment EB represents the final intuitive step to Good and the value of the "diánoia" depends on this latter.

This gnoseological and metaphysical doctrine is repeated by Plato in the famous myth of the cavern. Some men live their lives from birth tied hand and foot inside a cave, with their gaze turned to the far wall where overturned shadows are projected of those who pass by the cavern during the day. High above and behind them, a weak light provides a shadowy and sinister illumination; they see nothing except the overturned shadows of the cave's external images.

The symbolism has an obvious meaning: if the slaves were freed, then they could not leave the cavern and look at the sun. They would have to prepare themselves gradually, seeing first the statuettes that some passersby carry on their shoulders; then they would see the men themselves. Having exited, they would not look at the sun but would be content to fix their gaze on the reflection in the water of objects illuminated by the sun. Only after a long preparation will they ascend the peak to contemplate the sun. "To gaze at the sun . . . for itself, in its place, and to fix the pupil on it" (516 b) is to see the "idea of Good, the cause of all that is good and beautiful for everyone" (517 c).[310]

These outlines from the *Republic* will suffice to give us a complete idea of Plato's metaphysical maturity. The visible world is provisional, and man leads a crepuscular life on it;[311] we have a shadowy conception of this world; man must free himself from the fetters of the senses and prepare himself for an encounter with Good, the cause of all reality.

4. *The Conclusive Phase of Ascending Dialectics*

After the *Republic*, Plato wrote the *Phaedrus*, which closes the cycle as ascending dialectics (this is Taylor's opinion, against the claims of Joel, who considered the *Phaedrus* a youthful writing, and against Ritter, who said the work was written after the *Parmenides*). In this work we encounter the typical elements of the mystical Plato: myths (the cicada, Borea, Theut, and the great myth of the charioteer; Socrates is presented in his "atopia" (221 d, 215 a). The dialogue reconsiders themes from the *Symposium*: dialectics, rhetoric, purification of the soul, etc. Hence we see the difficulty in determining the key points of the dialogue. Wilamowitz makes the dialogue an exaltation of the philosophical experience of the philosopher, and not of philosophy. Taylor makes it a dialogue on rhetorics, in continuity with the Gorgias; for Friedländer the central theme is love of the ideas; etc.

The dialogue contains three discourses on love: one belonging to *Phaedrus* (probably debating with Isocrates and Lysias), and two to Socrates. The first contains a Platonic intention: we can speak of love, as the rhetorics, Sophists and logographs like Lysias (445–

389) do, but following only the artistic rules of oratory ("systasis"), such as preambles, expositions, testimonies, proofs, probabilities and confirmations. Sophistic cleverness arrives at this extravagant thesis: it favours those who do not love over those who love.

Following this is Socrates' discourse on love, preceded by an essay on love written by Lysias. Here another unacceptable conclusion is reached: "different is the condition of who loves and who does not love" (228 d), etc. After a pause, Socrates is ashamed of what he has said, as a 'fatuous and in a certain sense impious discourse" (242 d). Then he gives a third discourse, his "palinodia", which can be outlined as a poly-syllogism: a) without a divine origin for the soul, there is no true love; b) without a true or ideal love, there is no philosophy; c) without philosophy, there are no true rhetorics or art.[312]

The first thesis contains a demonstrative part (the soul moves itself, hence it is immortal and eternal). Four divine madnesses, or prophetic gifts, arise from divine character: divination, poetry, priesthood and philosophy, which have been entrusted, respectively, to Apollo, the Muses, Dionysus and Aphrodites. Because of these characteristics, the soul tends toward pure love, which is an assimilation with God and an overcoming of the senses in a "raising of the head toward being in its fullness" (249 c) and a contemplation of "the eternal beings existent for themselves" in the Hyper-Uranius (249 c). This ascent is possible only insofar as the soul remembers its divine origin with the gods and its fall (myth of the charioteer who leads two horses, one white, noble and docile, and the other black, a rebel who provoked the fall of the soul into the body). From this memory of divine origin, the soul will be capable of true rhetoric. Philosophy teaches rhetoric three principles: a) knowledge of souls and their relation to the ideas: b) knowledge of which souls are receptive to the ideas; and c) to adapt to individual souls the truthful word, to penetrate and move the soul toward the ideas ("psychacogía"). True rhetoric will then reject formal forensic writing and exercises.

CHAPTER SIX

PLATONIC CRITIQUE OF THE DOCTRINE OF IDEAS

1. *The Third Period of Platonic Philosophy*

The first period of Platonic philosophy was a reproduction of Socratic teachings, as these doctrines remained vividly in his mind soon after Socrates' death (399 – 387). The second period, as we said, began with the foundation of the Academy (387) and continued with the difficult and avid discovery of the ideas through his second voyage to Sicily (367). This was the moment when Plato, having discovered the beauty of ideal realities, traced the outlines of various points of arrival: rhetoric, aesthetic initiation, reminiscence, the pulling sciences, the cult of the soul: "delirium" (*Phaedrus*), "sublime science" (*Republic*) and "vision" (*Symposium*) are the most frequent expressions with which Plato expresses his encounter with the super-celestial beauty (*Phaedrus*) of the ideas.

The failure of his second voyage, the presence of students with lively, critical and acute genius (Theodorus, Eudoxus, Aristotle), and further contact with Eleatic and Pythagorean doctrines, combined to give rise to various questions concerning the reality and the cognitive process leading to them (cfr. number 112). It also remained to examine just how far the doctrine of the ideas would remain valid when faced with specific problems: gnoseology, politics, morals, cosmology, etc. Plato responded to these questions with a variety of dialogues; of these works, *Parmenides* is undoubtedly the key and premise for further critical reflections on his philosophy.

Thus we enter into major descending dialectics, or "metretics". These dialogues are less interesting in the literary sense, but all the more important for their highly metaphysical content.

2. *Parmenides*

It was probably written at the time of his return from Syracuse (365?), with the goal of responding to the problems posed by the doctrine of ideas (first part) and to restate its validity (second part) through the reduction "ad absurdum" of Eleatism. The interlocutors are Parmenides, Socrates, Aristotle (perhaps the young twenty-year-old student? But in the dialogue he is called "one of the Thirty Tyrants – 127 a) and Zeno of Elea.

The less noble style, the symmetrical method of thesis-antithesis, and the complexity of the problems discussed have long divided Scholars into two groups: the boundless admirers who, beginning with the neo-Platonists, considered the dialogue their Bible (Proclus, Damascius). It was here that Hegel found the prelude for his transcendental philosophy of the "logos", which in its triadic rhythm becomes nature and spirit;[313] P. Schuhl considers the work "a laboratory of metaphysics". Still, the detractors are even more numerous. Wilamowitz-Möllendorf was scandalised that the divine Plato abandoned himself to a scholastic exercise similar to "a mill whose wheels grind themselves, since no grains have been placed in the mill-hopper" (op. cit., pp. 402–403). A. Speiser (*Ein Parmenides Kommentar*, *Studien zur platonischen Dialektik*, 2nd edition, Stuttgart 1959) considered himself faced with a Sophist game. M. Heidegger accused Plato of obliterating the "eón" of Parmenides and taking refuge in the "Unum"; but unity is an essential property of being, not a constituent. Burnet and Taylor consider the *Parmenides* a parody with which Plato derides some philosophers. There are others who consider the work "an extremely subtle and masterly analysis dealing with problems of the sort we call logical (Cornford, *Plato and Parmenides*, 1939). This view is seconded by Enrico Berti ("Struttura e significato del *Parmenide* di Platone", in *Giornale di Metafisica*, XXVI, 1971, pp. 497–527), who states that participation ("metéchein") does not have a metaphysical meaning but indicates the logical connection between subject and predicate, etc.[314]

Leaving aside the various interpretations and concentrating *on the metaphysical value* of the dialogue, let us briefly summarise the first part, dedicated to the problem of participation. Being is one but communicates itself to the many ("onta"). This communication, which appeared in *Symposium* (211 d), *Phaedo* (74) and the *Republic* (524 b), is developed here through two formulas. First, participation ("méthexis") then imitation ("mímesis"). Things participate in and imitate being. However, this communication implies six difficulties: a) it would be necessary to admit that filth and dirt participate in their respective ideas. However, for these realities there can be no "métexis"; b) to participate means to take part or all of an idea. Participating in a stuff would cut it into pieces until it were gone. But this is absurd; c) the argument of the third man:[315] Socrates is the participation in the ideal Socrates, and this latter participates in a third Socrates. But this is absurd!

On the gnoseological level, if one admits that the ideas are "thoughts" (noémata"): a) one would have to admit that existents are thinking thoughts, and thought thoughts without their own thought; b) the ideas would be so different from things that they would become a closed world which man could not know;[316] c) sensible things, in turn, would become a world unto themselves, which the ideal realities could not know. But this is wrong: how could one think of a real world without the ideas? "It is a very strange wisdom which takes knowledge away from God" (124 e).

After this first part, which obviously remains suspended, Plato confronts the problem of participation with more philosophical vigour, working from two hypotheses: a) *if the One exists*, then what consequences are there for reality?; b) *if the one does not exist*, then what consequences ensue? The goal of this project is to even more clearly show the absurdity ("àtopon", 156 d) of those who negate participation in the universe.

If the One exists . . .

1) if the One exists *in the absolute sense* (absolute transcendence), then it would be as if only the sun were to exist, the "First King", without things and their determinations (to be here or there; to be this or that thing; to be old or young, similar and dissimilar, etc.).

2) If the One exists *in the relative sense*, then the many also exist and hence participation is possible.

3) If the One exists, *then the many also exist*. But the many could not exist *in an absolute way* because then there would be no One. Things cannot exist without the One (absolute immanence).

4) If the many exist *in a relative sense*, then all things would participate in the One in a different way.

5) If the many exist *in the negative sense*, then only matter would exist.

If the One does not exist . . .

6) If the One does not exist *in the absolute sense*, then everything would be negated.

7) If the One does not exist *in the relative sense*, then a certain analogical participation exists.

8) If the many do not exist *in an absolute sense*, then nothing exists.

9) If the many do not exist *in a relative sense*, then masses without relations would exist, all subject to contraries.

Therefore, in these nine hypotheses, Plato proposes an ontology which excludes both the ineffable apophatic One and an analysis of the properties of things, which would be transformed into an empty logic and a silence when faced with the One. Therefore, true philosophy is contemplation and doctrine, silence and dialectics in the ocean of non-being. The One in itself (the supreme = God) is a being or a non-being, depending on whether someone chooses either its absolute transcendence to things or its bonds of participation. Analogously, sensible things are nothing with respect to the One's plenitude, but they do exist with respect to imitative participation.[317]

This is also true for the other aspects ("gene", "eide"), which we now call "transcendentalia": "unum", "verum", "bonum", "simile", "idem", etc. These are valid both for the ideal and empirical world.[318]

3. *Descending Dialectics Faced with the Gnoseological Problem: the* Theaethetus

If the *Parmenides* can be considered an ontological treatise, then the *Theaethetus* confronts gnoseological and psychological problems, just as the *Sophistes* develops metaphysics and *Politicus* discusses politics.

This is no longer a discussion on whether we know the ideas (which are never mentioned) as super-sensible realities, but a description of how we perceive the "common aspects", or intelligible predicates ("koinà", 185 c) of the "ousia", insofar as they possess an existence down here ("ousia", 186 b). It should be noted that this knowledge does not develop through abstraction (as Aristotle later said), but through direct contact of the "soul's pure thought" (186 d).[319] Therefore, the problem is knowledge ("epistéme") and regards the various forms with which we capture the physical world. Science is not (as in the Republic) an intuition of the ideas, but a determination of the relation of the knowing subject and real objects ("aisthetá").

There are three forms of this relation: sensation (to which Plato dedicates 36 pages), true opinion (16 pages), and opinion accompanied by reason (9 pages).

Sensation is what knows everything that is in movement (Heraclitus), where man becomes the measure of all things (Protagoras) and where sensation is science. Obviously, Plato wished to arrive at an unacceptable materialistic anthropology through three propositions: it is folly to state that sensation is science, just as it is folly to make man the measure of all things and to state that only becoming is the goal of knowledge. To refute this theory, it is not necessary to postulate the ideas; it suffices to refer to the "Koiná", the universal data of thought.

True opinion ("doxa alethés") is not ignorance, but a subjective knowledge which could be true or false.[320] False opinion gives rise to the problem of error ("allodoxia"), which is based on memory and sensation (195 a) or on non-motivated opinion. However, true opinion is not yet science in the proper sense; it is judgement without self-criticism.

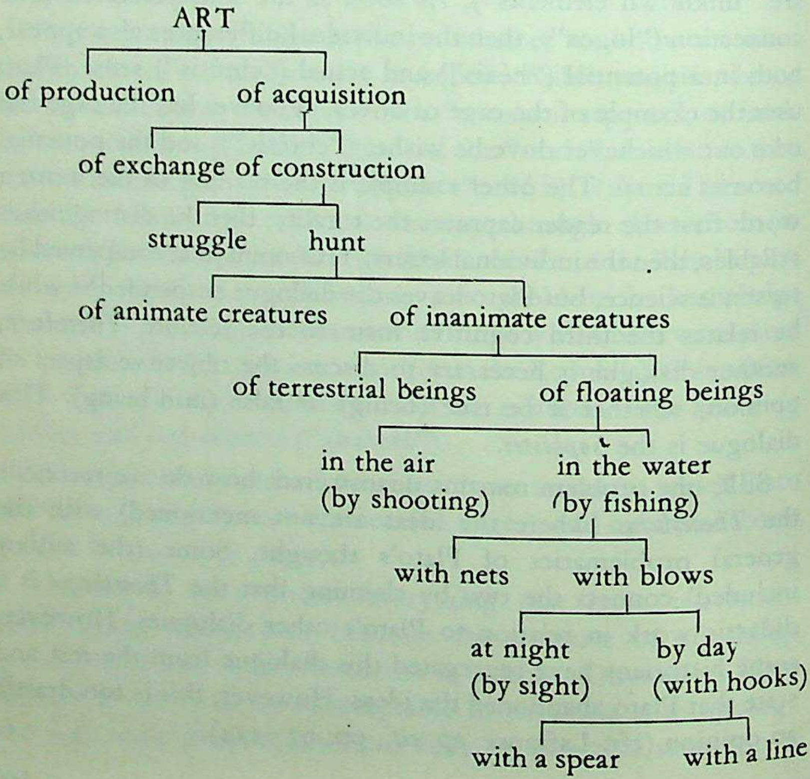
True opinion accompanied by reason ("metà lógou") is a knowledge which ends with the elements of sensible reality and their connections. For example, the simple "doxa" permits me to know the car separately from the tyres, the steering wheel and the floor (which are "unknown elements"). As soon as the soul perceives their connection ("logos"), then the individual differences also appear, both in a potential ("héxis") and actual ("chrêsis") sense. Plato uses the example of the cage of doves. Whoever has the cage can take out whichever dove he wishes ("chrêsis"), and the potential becomes actual. The other example is the reading of the written word: first the reader captures the totality, then he distinguishes syllables, then the individual letters. True opinion accompanied by reason is science, but Plato leaves the dialogue suspended[321] while he relates the third cognitive form to the second. Therefore, another dialogue is necessary to discuss the objective aspect of opinion, whether it be true (being) or false (non-being). This dialogue is the *Sophistes*.

Still, one problem remains unanswered: how do we reconcile the *Theaethetus* (where the ideas are not mentioned) with the general problematics of Plato's thought. Some (the author included) connect the two by claiming that the *Theaethetus* is a didactic work in relation to Plato's other dialogues. However, some historians have segregated this dialogue from the rest and state that Plato abandoned the ideas. However, this is too drastic an opinion (cfr. Lafrance, *op. cit.*, pp. 97–114).

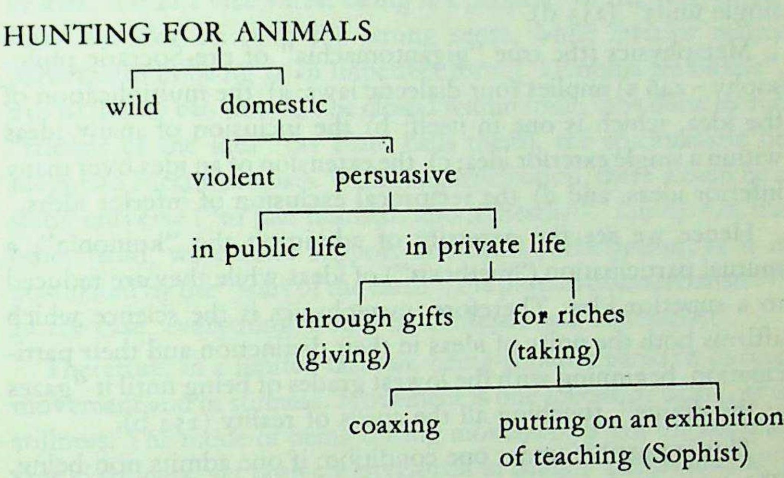
4. *Descending Dialectics and the Logical-Metaphysical Problem*

The *Sophistes* is a dialogue classified together with the *Theaetetus*, after *Parmenides*. The *Sophistes* reconsiders the themes of both its immediate precedents: the metaphysics of participation (*Parmenides*) and the logic of predication of predicates (*Theaethetus*). The pretext for confronting the two questions is presented by Plato in an initial framework regarding the definition of a person who is a Sophist; here the minor descending dialectics (or "diairesis") finds its most salient moments.

There are seven definitions. Here we give only a few of the most ironical examples. The Sophist is a hunter of terrestrial animals. Plato works from two forms of art, which lead to subdivisions to the definitive terms.


ART
of production
of acquisition
of exchange
of construction
struggle
hunt
of animate creatures
of inanimate creatures
of terrestrial beings
of floating beings
in the air
(by shooting)
in the water
(by fishing)
with nets
with blows
at night
(by sight)
by day
(with hooks)
with a spear
with a line

From the fifth division, the hunting of terrestrial animals, Plato detached a new "diairesis", or division:


HUNTING FOR ANIMALS
wild
domestic
violent
persuasive
in public life
in private life
through gifts (giving)
for riches (taking)
coaxing
putting on an exhibition of teaching (Sophist)

Hence we arrive at the second definition: the Sophist is a hunter (first division), who is commercial (second-third-fourth division), eristic (fifth division), who refutes (sixth division), a seller of words, impostor, charlatan and imitator (seventh division) (235 a).

At this point the dialogue (which has four participants: Socrates, Theaethetus, Phaedo and an anonymous guest from Elea) confronts the metaphysical problem. If we state that the Sophist teaches error, then we must also conclude that non-being exists as the foundation for this error. But how can we admit the existence of non-being? Is this not a betrayal of Parmenides' doctrine, which taught that non-being does not exist? Yet "it will be necessary . . . to demonstrate that non-being exists in some way, and that, vice versa, being does not exist in some way" (241 d). This is confessed by the foreigner from Elea, who declares that he has become guilty of parricide.

Therefore, being is like grammar and music, where grave and acute tones are found. Philosophy, which must study the inflections of being, is called "dialectic science" and consists of distinguishing with sufficient clarity a single idea with the greatest possible extension. This idea extends from one part of being to another, while still remaining distinct from the extension; it is a single unity" (253 d).

Metaphysics (the true "gigantomachia" of pre-Socratic philosophy – 246 a) implies four dialectic laws: a) the multiplication of the idea, which is one in itself; b) the inclusion of many ideas within a single exterior idea; c) the extension of an idea over many inferior ideas; and d) the reciprocal exclusion of inferior ideas.

Hence we see the necessity of admitting the "koinonía", a mutual participation ("méthexis") of ideas while they are reduced to a superior idea. Therefore, metaphysics is the science which affirms both the unity of ideas in their distinction and their participation, beginning with the lowest grades of being until it "gazes at the divine", touching all the cords of reality (254 b).

This is possible under one condition: if one admits non-being. The necessity is not to admit absolute non-being, but its relative counterpart ("próblema tò mè ón os ésti", 237 c). Absolute non-being is unthinkable and cannot be predicated; however, relative non-being permeates the fundamental predicates or genuses of reality ("géne", idéai", éide"), which are like "regions" (254 b) in which reality manifests itself. Following is the Platonic scheme of the five supreme "genuses":

BEING
movement stillness
identical different
("tautón") ("tháteron")

While descending, being spreads itself in movement and stillness, in the identical and in the diverse. However, movement is in a certain way non-being, as likewise is the case of stillness. Hence the identical participates in being, but excludes the "diverse".

Let us briefly comment on the five "mégista géne". First of all, being is the "prime principle" (243 d), "god" (254 a), the prime fundamental predicate of all ideal and sensible reality ("mìa idéa dià tôn póllôn, pantelòs on".[322]

We should also observe, as Rist[323] and Peck did, that being exists as idea, and not vice versa. Being is a property of the idea; therefore, the idea exists in the strong sense, while inferior reality participates in being in an imperfect form ("koinonía tês ousías", 250 b). Being can thus not be closed within itself, as is done by the "friends of the idea" (as Plato calls them), the spiritualistic or Megarian Eleatic monists. Without participation, there would be a static universe ("tò pân hestekòs apodéchesthai", 249 d). On the other hand, we cannot support unlimited participation, as it is postulated by the "sons of the earth", the pluralistic materialists.[324] In the case, everything would be confused and contingent.

Therefore, in a limited fashion, being is participated in during movement and in stillness. Movement is one species of being, as is stillness. The mode of being during movement is not the same as that in stillness, yet both are enveloped in being ("perichòmenai") from without. Even the movement of thought is not outside of being; the discourse ("logos") on being is a repetition of the objective being ("hén ti tôn ònton", 260 a).

In addition to movement and stillness, two other inferior genuses are listed: *the identical and the diverse*, which express the sympathy of repulsion of the predicates of being. For example, "movement" is "different" from stillness, just as stillness is different from movement, and movement is different from being, and so forth.

Note, however, that the *identical* cannot be compared to the A = A of Fichte, to the being which, through dialectics, becomes its contrary; Plato wished to state that the identical makes the idea-form more intimate to itself. Moreover, the identical is not being, but it depends on being; it has a relative value. On the contrary, being has absolute value, because it exists before movement and before stillness.

We can summarise these considerations by stating that the philosopher is the person who mentally repeats creation, insofar as the philosopher witnesses in his thought the multiplication by God of being throughout reality (258). Hence participation is the foundation for predicability. In the following diagram we see that there are two connected planes or regions, the metaphysical and the logical, each with their own foundation, bond and object.

	Metaphysical Level	*Logical Level*
Foundation	being ("hén ti", "Idéa", "theós")[325]	"logos", "diánoia"
Bond	Participation ("koinonía") and power ("dynamis")	predication ("symploké") or logical connection of genuses
Gnoseology	"eidos" (aspects of reality)	"genos" (logical predicates), universal involvement
Ontology	being and non-being; production of beings from non-beings (265 a), which is done by God	grammar of reality and music of all tunes of being

To conclude, philosophy is ontology and logic ("logos tôn eidôn kai genôn"), a universal syntax of real and conceptual being.

5. *Descending Dialectics, Politics and Morals*

As the *Theaethetus* is the examination of logic after the reforms set forth in *Parmenides*, and *Sophistes* is the examination of ontology, politics are similarly examined in the *Politicus* and morals in *Philebus*.

In the *Politicus*, Plato confronts three basic problems: a) who is the consignee of politics (man); b) who is the protagonist (the king); and c) what is the king's function (to be a shepherd) (269 b).

For the determination of the function (the dialogue's point of departure), Plato uses the minor dialectic method (or "diairesis"). He gives 16 dichotomies, or subdivisions, together with two digressions. The result is as follows: politics is an imperative, self-directive theoretical science regarding animate beings living in walking terrestrial groups; the subjects are those without horns, those born of "uncrossed" generation, featherless bipeds. Politics are a pastoral art.

This definition is not completely acceptable. The shepherd is a "harvester, physician, matrimonial agent, and the only expert in obstetrics" (268 b). He is also a musician, who flatters and admonishes animals for their perfection. But he is not a herder. Therefore, to define the king Shepherd, we must "proceed in a different way" (268 b): the myth. Plato refers to governance during the Golden Age, when Saturn, the good god, king, shepherd, artist and father, created a perfect humanity and directed it cyclically at his leisure. As the spinner does in her craft, letting the skein rotate[326] of its own inertia, so God did with humanity. At first he directed the world in person; then he left it to its destiny. After having let it reach "the boundless sea of dissimilarity" of error and evil, after 10,000 years he started the retrograde and palingenetic movement, which will end with a return to divine governance.

The myth leads to the reconsideration of another diaeretic dichotomy. Royal political art is a texture which does not operate indirectly on man (like the art of preparing spool), but it operates on objects in a proper fashion, not to dye it, not to comb (separate), but to join: either wringing the fabric, or spinning the plot, or (above all) weaving together the fabric and the plot. The politician joins the audacious (fabric) and soft (plot) natures into a unified social framework.

However, the politician is not only an artist: the practice presupposes the theory, which for Plato obviously are a "science of measure", a knowledge of the bonds ("koinonía") or "necessary and essential relations of becoming" (283 d). Therefore, the philosopher-politician takes recourse in the ideas, in those "incorporeal beings which are also the most beautiful and most important, which unveil themselves through reasonings expressed in definitions" (286 a).

The "science of measure" or "metretics" can be considered on two levels: as a science of the cosmos (measure of the number, extension), or as science of the spirit (measure of the just, of the convenient, of the just man). On a second level, the politician is the person who knows how to discover the ideal in the concrete (ousía anankaîa tês genéseos", 283 d), in an ontological synthesis called exactness (284 d). The idea becomes the history of humanity, or of a nation.

The idea becomes individual history when it is applied to individual concrete cases. This is concluded by Plato in the *Philebus*, a "scholastic" dialogue (Turolla) with a heavy style but pervaded by vivid sparks and by ideal tension. It was this dialogue that Manno declared to be among Plato's most sublime.[327]

The personages in the dialogue are Protarchus, Philebus and Socrates,[328] and the subject is pleasure. Plato confronts the moral question with an important philosophical premise on major descending dialectics and the "science of measure".

Metretics (the "science of measure" is: a) *in its origin* a divine gift. Only God can reveal that reality is made up of ontological principles (23 c); b) *in its structure*, the "science of measure" concerns the ideas, "ideas which are eternal" (16 e), whose name is "monads", "ideas". They have a connection with concrete reality as a "one-many" relation (16 d), and the ideas regulate the unity of reality in the same way that the unity of a word is given by its spoken sound, which is the result of syllables, which in turn is the result of letters. From the unity of empirical reality, one can arrive at the unity of the ideal cosmos, in which the ideal One contains inferior ideas (16 d). Hence a *superior "science of measure"* of species and ideas exists. Fundamentally, there are two species of ideas: the idea of the determinable ("apeiron") and the idea of the determined ("péras") (18 b); c) *in the application* of this thought, Plato asked himself how worthy pleasure is for man. *Sensual pleasure* is not worthy because it consists of filling and emptying the appetites and makes man "a marine sponge or mollusk living in its shell" (21 c). Scratching oneself, ridding oneself of an itch, satisfying the touch and taste are not a human good.

On the other hand, there are *spiritual pleasures* like science, intuition and opinion. However, this pleasure is not human in itself. Just as corporeal pleasure by itself is irrational sensuality, so intellectual pleasure by itself is not accessible. Only a "stupendous and miraculous Mind and wisdom, which disposes of, orders and guides everything", can live from pure spiritual pleasures. This Mind is the queen of heaven and earth, who "rules all things in eternity" (30 d).

Therefore, there is a third type of pleasure: the *mixed pleasure*. To this category are applied the four ontological elements which are proper "to every existent" (23 c). Be it "indeterminate" ("ápeiron") or determined ("péras"), the "mixed" ("miktón") causes it ("aitía"). The *indeterminate* is described in terms which refer to the Sophists, and is illustrated with examples from the physical world: hot, cold, fast, slow, etc. Therefore, the indeterminate is subject to contraries and the world of uncontrolled instincts. The "*determined*" is the law of order (25 b). Without this all things would be chaos and darkness. It is not only a value, but it generates value. It is transcendental. The encounter of the indeterminate with the determined interrupts the struggle of opposites and is a movement toward being ("génesis eis tèn ousían"), (26 d), towards the "mixed", which is "*end-like*", or modelled by a limit ("péras"). This being is the cosmic principle, so that meteorology, medicine, etc., are based on the validity of this ontological law. Finally, the cause is the divine Mind, which remains eternal before the "mixed", but makes up the "mixed".

The four elements make up the mixed human good on the moral plane. Pleasures and pain require being, which is good, in order to be human goods. This being is the light of the soul, and it imposes itself as order on the obscurity of the senses. Hence "the just, pious and good man is a friend of God" (39 e); this man is a philosopher because he knows dialectics and realises the adage "know yourself" (48 d). Beauty and the proportion of truth (65 a) are the effects of philosophy within the dominion of sensibility. It is the moral man, guided by this light, who distinguishes the true pleasures from the false, the good pleasures from the wicked, which are "a ridiculous imitation of the true ones" (40 c).

6. . *Descending Dialectics and Cosmology*

Plato's conclusive philosophical project was to write the trilogy *Critias*, *Timaeus* and *Hermocrates*, which were followed by the *Laws*, a work completed by (it was said) Philippus of Opus. The *Hermocrates* was not written,[329] and the *Critias* contains a narration of the myth of Atlantis. This myth was repeated at the beginning of the *Timaeus*, which (together with the *Republic*) is one of the most ambitious works in the history of the world's philosophy.[330] The *Timaeus*, written after Plato's last voyage to Sicily, is presented as a synthesis or encyclopaedia of all Platonic philosophy, in which the dialectic method and Pythagorean metretics were applied to a description of the origin and formation of the world. Therefore, this work is an application of the descending dialectic method to cosmology and anthropology.

The *Timaeus* opens with the myth of Atlantis, with the evocation of a continent with the splended civilisation of Posidonia, which had been submerged after a terrible catastrophe[331] 9000 years earlier. The theme was suddenly interrupted at number 27, almost as if Plato were indicating that the myth itself does not suffice to "begin from the origins of the world and conclude with human nature" (27 a). All this indicates an authentic encyclopaedia of the sciences: the history of philosophy, anthropological sciences such as biology, anatomy and physiology, as well as chemistry, astronomy, mathematics, crystallography, with a philosophical encyclopaedia referring to all the subjects of his preceding philosophical discourse.

However, the dialogue is not eclectic, because Plato leaves a unified and personal imprint on this vast design. All this leads to the difficult question of sources: where did Plato gather so much richness of doctrine and such vast scientific information? Will it suffice to confirm the prevalent influence of Pythagoreanism, as L. Stefanini wrote (II, p. 313)? Or should we negate this influence, as Erik Frank did? What value should we give to Diogenes Laërtius history (III, 9), when he states that Plato composed the *Timaeus* following the example of one of Philolaus' volumes, or one of Epicharmus' volumes? (*ibid.*)? Whatever the influence may have been (some even postulate Timaeus of Locri), it cannot be doubted that masterpieces are attributed to geniuses; a masterpiece may be tinged by inferior copies, but never the work of hacks.

It could also be postulated that Plato wished to indirectly refute Democritus' materialism.

The philosophical discourse opens with an exposition of the method, which is not to be found in any other dialogue. After a prayer to the gods for the success of such a difficult treatise, Plato proposes a series of postulates and corollaries which remind us of a mathematical procedure.

First postulate: being is one thing, becoming another. The former is the object of intuition and indicates fullness and perfection. The latter belongs to opinion and is part of the imperfect.

Second postulate: the visible world requires a cause, an artificer, a father (28 c).

Third postulate: cosmological theory regards becoming. Hence it is the object of an opinion, or "eikòs lógos". The doctrine of being is metaphysics, which enjoys a full certainty and truth.

Fourth postulate: good is the final cause for which the world was made. The supreme Author is Good, which communicates a soul and a mind to the universal living world. This soul and mind are an expression of goodness, beauty and order.

First corollary: there is only one perfect and optimum world, and it is finite (in opposition to the Atomists). It is similar to the "ideal cosmos or paradigm, which inspired the Demiurge in making the world" (30 d).

Second corollary: the demiurge or divine Artificer made ("poieîn") the world out of four elements: water, air, earth and fire, in the following proportion:

$$\frac{\text{fire}}{\text{air}} \quad \frac{\text{air}}{\text{water}} \quad \frac{\text{water}}{\text{earth}}$$

In mixing the elements, he impressed a bond on them so that the resulting world would be indissoluble (32 c).

Third corollary: in forming the world, the Demiurge used all and only the matter of the four elements so that the world would be self-sufficient and as perfect as possible.

Fourth corollary: the world, because it is living and perfect, is spherical, smooth and rotating. Therefore, speaking anthropomorphically, it does not have eyes, ears or arms. It moves in a circular fashion, excluding other imperfect kinds of movement. Outside of the world rests a vacuum.

After this methodological premise, Plato begins his "eikós lógos", a myth which comes close to "truth" (see above, number 133),[332] and which describes the genesis (not the creation!) of the world in a descending fashion. First of all, God gazes at the ideas or the intelligible cosmos, an eternal transcendent reality exempt from all becoming (27 d, 28 a). Then he forms the Soul of the world[333] and produces it by mixing together the form of being ("outsias eîdos"),which is not the idea in itself, but the "identical", and the "different", which is not yet corporeal.[334] Hence the soul is gifted with intellectuality and sensibility, which implies intuition, science, opinion and sensation. While the Demiurge has intellection, but is not intelligible, the Soul of the world feels and is felt. Indeed, this soul is the extreme margin of the divine in relation to worldly reality and its principle of order. It is divided according to the "sacred number" (Pythagorean!), where music, arithmetic and astronomy are included:

1 (Moon)
(Mercury) 2 3 (Venus)
(Sun) 4 9 (Jupiter)
(Mars) 8 27 (Saturn)

The intervals between the various grades correspond to those of the Doric diatonic octachord and indicate that the cosmic soul does not only imprint order on celestial harmony, but also on musical harmony. The universal harmony attributed to the soul can be seen by turning over the figure so as to obtain an X, which is the symbol of external rotation with the participation of the "identical", and an internal rotation with the participation of the "different". Hence we have a sphere.

From the various velocities of the planets (which is the same for the Sun, Venus and Mercury, and different for the other four planets), we deduce the conjunction of the Soul with the material world. This world is the soul's body, a terrestrial imitation of the eternal idea. After the body, the Demiurge presides over the "creation" of time. Time rests alongside the soul, but it is not contemporary with time. The soul "creates" time, but it is not time. Therefore, time is defined as "the mobile image of eternity, of what is in itself" (37 e). After the three original "productions" (soul, body and time), the Demiurge continues on to the production of the moon, the sun, Venus and Mercury, which rest within the orbit of the "identical". This is likewise the case for the other stars, within the orbit of the "diverse". Then the production of living beings takes place, which are divided into four species: the gods, the winged, the aquatic and the terrestrial. The Demiurge first contemplates them in the ideas ("enclosed within the living, whose being is full", 39 e) and then proceeds to their realisation.

We should also mention the sacred discourse of the Demiurge "father", who addresses the gods and invites them to produce man and other inferior living creatures by mixing the four elements with the individual soul of each.

In this way Plato explained the origin of the world, working from above with the exemplary cause (Ideas), the efficient cause (the Demiurge), the material cause (the four elements) and the formal cause (the presence of the Soul, the principle of order). Still, this is a myth, an "eikòs logós". Dissatisfied, Plato leaves the myth aside and returns to dialectics: how is it possible to explain the material world through the ideas?

Response: before the world existed, there were three principles: being, becoming and matter. The ideas are the subject of contemplation by the gods and, in part, by men. Becoming is an imitation of being; being is generated, based on space and time relations, and is the object of opinion. The third element is matter. The ideas, immersing themselves in matter, produce bodies and their becoming. But how?

Here Plato confrônts the most difficult problem, with which he had the least success. He starts from Democritus' concept of matter as initial chaos, existing before the work of the Demiurge. This pretense is only a mere hypothesis serving as a basis for Plato, who will then discarde it and propose his own solution.[335] Matter is the indestructible "seat" ("hédra") of bodies, a space ("chóra") which encloses them and still "does not exist in any place, neither in heaven nor on the earth". It is a "cistern", a matrix, a "receptor", because in its bosom or substratum, before the formational work ("schematízein") of the Demiurge, the elements were crowded, confused, chaotic or placed in a movement without order. It is the "nourisher" and "receptacle" of bodies. It is not water, or air, or earth, or fire, or any other element (51 a). It is not easy to know matter; it is hardly credible, and reveals itself in "spurious reasoning", almost as if it existed in a dream. Its existence is demonstrated through the fact that the elements change and mutually interplay their being: water-air-fire, etc.

Thereby, in the changing of the elements, there is something that remains. This is matter, which is anterior to the four elements. "It remains identical to itself in all things and in each thing; all things that enter and exit from the receptacle are an imitation ("mimesis") of what exists eternally" (50 c). Matter does not distinguish, but is distinguishable according to the presence of the elements.

Just as matter is the "mother" and the "ideas" are the "father", so the resulting composition is the offspring (51 d), while the Demiurge is the "former" ("schematízein").

The statement that the composition is the encounter of matter and idea raises the problem of how an idea could unite with a chaotic element. From the beginning, Plato states that this is an "imitation". Every element is an imitation of an idea. *Fire is an* *intelligible* having the form of a tetrahede, which results from two joined scalene triangles, which produce an isosceles triangle multiplied by four. Hence we obtain the figure of a solid inscribed in a circle, pointed and perfected in such a way as obtain the characteristics of fire: slight, acute, small, mobile.

Intelligible air is an octahedron; *intelligible water* is an icosahedron (very mobile). *Intelligible earth* is a cube.

Therein, the four elements taken together do not make up matter because they are "images" of intelligible realities. Their idea joined with the geometric figure makes up a body.[336]

After this second dialectic explanation of corporeal reality, Plato descends to the determinations of bodies' structures and functions. Man is searched on the subject of sensations. Touch has the hard and the soft, heavy and light, smooth and rough, etc., as its object. Taste deals with the harsh, the acrid, the spicy, the salted and the acid. Smell occupies itself with pleasant and unpleasant fumes; hearing with grave and acute sounds. Colours are corpuscles which enter as lights into the lamp of the eye. There are eleven colours: white, black, red, purple, brown, orange, gray, ochre, dark blue, celeste, blue-gray, etc.

The human soul was "made"[337] by the gods on the command of the Demiurge. The soul is threefold: hegemonic (or deliberative and dominant, based in the head), irascible, based in the chest, and concupiscent, based in the liver and spleen.

Following this is a minute finalistic presentation of various organs: marrow, brain (the divine seed), bones, muscle, flesh, tendons, respiration and lungs, heart, etc. Following this are some mentions of illnesses of the body and soul. The conclusion is a brief review of the other terrestrial animals, birds and fish.

The next work is the *Laws*, with a vast framework and presented in twelve books. This work is often accused of having a tired style, without impulse, animated by an almost-dead dialogue and a dogmatic perspective. Still, these are shadows cast by a great light. The theme (as the title itself announces) follows the interests of the

Athenian master. The ideals of a State in which the heads are a chosen race and a living unwritten law (*Republic*) were mitigated in the *Politicus*, where the central focus is on a person who would govern the State with an illuminated wisdom and without a constitution. In the Laws these concepts find their long-awaited triptych. If the disasters of Syracuse had dealt a grave blow to his hopes, then the great old man, having found a renewed faith in the "logos" and in the idea, entrusts the State (the "third") to a wise monarch who would establish a form of government "imitating" the ideal state,[338] through a constitution, paradigm and an imitation of the idea in "legality and in order" (875 d). The citizens would be servants of the law ("doûlos toû nómou", 698 c). Plato states: "all our research is oriented toward a single point: establishing which of our ordinances lead to virtue and which do not" (836 d). Virtue is truth performed, idea incarnate (963 a).

The dialogue is not significant in its method or in its doctrine of the ideas. Its numerous anthropological, political and theological theories are summarised in the next chapter, a synthesised presentation of Plato's thought.

CHAPTER SEVEN

GENERAL EXAMINATION OF PLATO'S PHILOSOPHICAL DOCTRINES

1. *Introductory Premise*

Having concluded our quick survey on Plato's spiritual evolution, it would be appropriate for us to dedicate a concluding chapter to a synthesis or summary which, although it avoids the system, nonetheless demonstrates the central ideas around which Plato's philosophical teaching revolves.

Some researchers refer to a so-called Platonic dualism; be it theological (idea and demiurge), anthropological (soul and body), gnoseological ("doxa" and "dianoia"), or cosmological (matter and geometric figures). We cannot negate that such a method possesses a certain didactic clarity, but it avoids two important points of Platonic point: its development and its unity.

We refer to what was said above (in paragraph 114): it is not difficult to find in Plato a hermeneutical and architectural principle, or, in Scholastic terms, a form and a matter. We have stated that Plato, with respect to Socrates, proposed *ideal politics*. Here "politics" is understood as the prevalent object or matter of Platonic research, and "ideal" is understood as the principle of construction in addition to the interpretation of the matter. Thereupon, our synthesis consists of a presentation of the material's fundamental concepts (anthropology, ethics, politics, asthetics, education, etc.), while relating these concepts to their respective form (the doctrine of ideas and theology).

The reason why we begin with anthropology is the fact that "politics", as a central theme, presupposes (for Plato) a peculiar vision of man. This can also be stated for ethics and aesthetics, which rest within the political framework of the triptych: the *Republic* the *Politicus*, the *Laws*.

2. *Platonic Anthropology*

Basing ourselves on the *Lexicon Platonicum* of Fridericus Astius (Lipsia 1835, reproduced in Bonn 1956), we find by the word "anthropos" a series of attributes and affirmations illustrating Plato's elevated concept of man: inventor of language (*Cratylus*, 399 c), most divine and most domestic animal (*Laws* X, 902), the most religious among the animals ("theosebéstaton", Axiochus 365), he who possesses wisdom (Protagoras, 322 a) and was privileged by a divine lot (*Politicus* X, 603 c), kissed by fortune and happiness (*Protagoras*, 312 d), etc.

Such an elevated concept cannot be explained only with Orphic mythology or pre-Socratic doctrines, but only with an authentic anthropology, a true philosophy of man.

However, Platonic anthropology is undoubtedly dualistic. Man is made of two disparate elements, soul and body, joined together through an unhappy "communion" ("koinonía", *Republic*, 611 b–c). The body is the less noble part: it is a tomb ("sôma", "sêma"), according to the myth of the charioteer. It is a prison, a vehicle ("óchema") of the soul. It encloses the soul like an oyster. Hence we have the result that man is not a substantial being, but a provisory amalgam of soul and body. Therein, man is more soul than body. Plato forcefully states, "we are soul" (*Phaedrus* 245 and *Politicus* 271 e). "Soul is man" (*Alcibiades* I, 130 c). Vices and wicked inclinations are based in the body (*Timaeus* 81 e, 87 b). However, the true evil for man is the body, because man's meditation is a meditation on death ("meléte thanàtou", *Phaedo* 81 a) as a liberation from the body.[339]

Thereupon, Platonic anthropology cannot help but be reduced to a study of the three categories of the soul: origin, nature and destiny.

Origin of the Soul: The intellective soul is co-eternal with the gods (*Meno*, *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*). Only in the *Timaeus* (as we have seen) does Plato admit that it is produced by the gods on the request of the Demiurge. Plato generally holds that the number of souls is fixed "ab aeterno", so that all the so-called proofs of the soul's immortality in reality tend to demonstrate its eternity, albeit through metempsychosis. The three basic arguments come from the *Phaedo* "ex reminiscentia" (based on the myth of the soul's fall into the body), "ex contrariis" (founded on a naturalistic conception of the universe, dominated by the law of opposites), and "ex similitudine animae cum ideis" (cfr. above, number 115), insofar as the soul is "eîdos" and "ousia". In addition to these three, Plato proposes other demonstrations. The soul is indestructible: even evil cannot kill it. ("Evidently, it follows that since nature is not destroyed by any kind of evil, be it proper or extraneous, then the soul always exists. Moreover, it follows that if it always is, then it must be immortal" – *Republic*, 611 a.) In the *Phaedrus* he adds that the soul moves itself. Now, what moves itself cannot ever perish.[340] In the *Meno* Plato specifies that the soul is "the seat of truth" and hence immortal. Therefore, it is "older than the body" (*Laws*, 892 b).

Plato notes an exception in the Timaeus, when he states that the Demiurge formed the souls of men with elements slightly inferior to those of the gods (41 d), since the soul is contingent, as the gods are ("thnetón"), but the Demiurge will not annihilate it.

Nature of the Soul: The soul is self-consciousness (*Theaethetus*) and freedom (*Republic* X) (cfr. J. Stenzel, *Das Problem aer Willensfreiheit in der Platonismus* and Guglielmino, *Il problema di libero arbitrio nel sistema platonico*, Catania 1936), which gradually awakens as if from a dream after its fall into the body due to an original guilt. It is "monoeidés" (*Phaedo*), or one; but in other dialogues, Plato repeats its threefold value (*Politicus*, *Phaedrus*, *Laws*) in that it possesses three faculties ("mórion"): reasoning, irascible and concupiscent with their respective seats in the brain, the chest and the abdomen. It is most divine, but it does not have colour or figure; it is invisible (*Phaedrus* 247); and in today's terms, we would call it "spiritual" (this concept had not yet entered classical philosophy). In his famous volume entitled *La théorie platonicienne de l'amour* (Paris 1909), Robin stated that the soul is a "demon" (pp. 128 ff.). This theory does not seem correct, as L. Souilhé demonstrated in *La notion platonicienne d'Intermédiare dans la philosophie des dialogues*, Paris 1919. The soul is intermediate, but not demonic; in fact, in the *Timaeus* it is made up of "identical" and "diverse" elements similar to the gods, but familial to the ideas. In the *Phaedrus*, the soul is inferior to gods and demons, and hence finds itself in the middle of a danger of falling. Nevertheless, when Plato states in the *Symposium* that it is possessed by the "eros" and that the "eros" is its demonic part, he returns to the soul its attribute of "demonic" ("demonic" indicates that it is enamoured to the ideal world in a confused way, through divine madness).

The difference between "eros" and "agape" distinguishes the Platonic anthropological definition from its Christian counterpart. While the "eros" is personal, an impulse from below, a confused and restless instinct which terminates in the "theoria", the "agape" is a gift and precept of God coming from above and leading to action.

The Destiny of the Soul: Plato also has his own philosophy regarding the soul's origin and nature, but not regarding its destiny. Plato knows *that* the soul is eternal, but not *how* this takes place. For this reason, we do understand why Plato took such frequent recourse to the eschatological myth. The cycle of reincarnations lasts 10,000 years, and it alternates according to a variation of punishment and purification due to moral life on this earth. However, the condemnation to Hades is not eternal. The return to celestial life or the return to terrestrial bodies is different for philosophers, lasting only 3000 years. The cycle is longer for warriors, poets and prophets. The important thing is the exercise of good, both in life and in death (myth of Er). Plato, remaining faithful to Socrates, teaches that the future of the soul is shrouded in unknowns and mysteries. However, it is certain that whoever does good in this life will not suffer evils in the afterlife.

3 *Platonic Ethics and Politics*

Present life and future life for Plato are regulated by the exercise of moral good, with the apex of this exercise being virtue. To this are opposed ignorance and madness, which are due to the body, excesses of pleasures, or physiological causes. Therefore, virtue arises from a rational justification and from the greatest good. Plato says, "We do not at all believe that the unjust and stupid man, when he is seized by injustice, dies because of the effects of injustice, which is an evil proper to the soul" (*Republic*, 609 c). However, if virtue derives from truth, then it follows that ethics are a privileged form of life for philosophers.

Hence Socratic intellectualism in the sphere of morals is also reflected in Platonic ethics, but in Plato it reveals itself in a political key.[341] Hence we arrive at the threefold character of Platonic ethics: intellectual, aristocratic and ambivalent.

It is *intellectual* because virtue does not depend on the will, but on the practical intelligence, which learns the virtues and translates them into action. Plato admits that justice is the highest of the four cardinal virtues because it consists of a learning of the good of the State. But the realisation of this virtue is more a matter of education than of ascetics, of intuition more than praxis.

It is *aristocratic*, because only philosophers can arrive at a knowledge of the supreme idea of good. The lower classes arrive at a "true opinion" ("orthé dóxa"), an extrinsic knowledge through the public education of moral life. Hence they obtain a virtue which Plato calls "public, of a second grade" (Republic, 500 d).[342] However, a third category of humans exists, the slaves. They know nothing and thus live amorally, and after their death their souls enter into the bodies of wasps and drones.

It is *ambivalent*, insofar as the purpose of popular morals is the moderate enjoyment of terrestrial goods (Platonic eudemonism). However, for philosophers, the greater morals are expressed negatively in a liberation from the passions of the body (*Phaedrus*, 67 b) and in escaping the bonds of matter; positively, the philosopher's virtue is an assimilation with God ("homoiosis toî theoî) which is realised in the intuition of the ideas (*Protagoras*, 360 d). In short, in Platonic ethics there is a Pythagorean, cathartic and purifying component, and a Socratic, intellectual component surpassed by the pluralism of virtues. However, it seems that Plato does not see ethics as an obligatory way to *salvation*; only the myths seem to allude to a bond between virtue and salvation (myth of the nude souls in the *Gorgias*). In this sense, the sanction of the moral order transcends present life through a recourse to religion. There are "rewards, recompense and gifts which, while the just man is alive, are offered to him by the gods and by men. This is all, excepting the gifts that justice in itself can offer" (*Republic*, 613 e). "Be certain that the gods do not abandon those who practise the virtues and wish to become as much as possible a man equal to God" (*Republic*, 613 a).[343]

The *primacy of Platonic politics* result from this ethical intellectualism, because only the heads of State possess truth, to the point where citizens' private opinions are incompatible with the true good of the community.

Therefore, it could be said that politics, as a privileged science, explains anthropology and ethics in a historical perspective. As long as Plato wrote Socratic dialogues, he occupied himself with morals. However, when he wanted to construct a philosophy, he did this by (as we said above) constructing a political trilogy: *Republic*, *Politicus* and the *Laws*. These works encompass the three moments of his activity as a thinker. It has often been stated that the invention or appearance of Platonic philosophy begins with the appearance of the ideas. In that case, the discourse on the "political ideal" can be (in a genetic perspective) turned into an "ideal dialectic of politics". It was the doctrine of ideas that transformed

Socratic ethics into politics (Letter VII). Therefore, it is correct to restate that the primacy of politics (as the supreme human science) derives from dialectics.[344]

In opposition to the "political realism" that reigned at the time, especially in Syracuse and Athens, Plato aspired to a praxis illuminated by a strong metaphysics. This metaphysics was chronologically posterior to his passion for politics. "It was life that demanded theory, and not theory that suggested his life's work."[345] Therefore, it was not perfectly subjective totalitarianism (*Republic* VI) which suggested to Plato the form of centralised government, but the totality of justice, of the objective common good. To the Sophistic principle of "pànta eatón" (a formula which precedes the "laissez faire" and "laissez passer" by two thousand years) Plato opposed the unity of the social sphere. It is obvious that the Platonic formula was subject to absolutism, but the historical exegesis on this point is not coherent.[346] Was it a utopia? This point, made by B. Russell (op. cit., pp. 160–170) can be conceded, but on the condition (not given by Russell) that we separate the various theories (which are well-distinguished) expressed in the trilogy and not group together the *Laws* and the *Republic*. We can accept no more of Russell's theories, since he writes with a certain superficiality and misinformation.

After these exegetic premises, we may briefly illustrate the outlines of Platonic political philosophy. First of all, we observe that it is a science (Politicus, 259 c); indeed, in some passages (Euthydemus, 291) it is considered the highest science. Its subject is organised social human life, yet politics does not derive from sociability. The State, although it is founded on human nature, in actual fact has origins that are contractual or forceful. Therefore, the duty of obedience comes before the conscious acceptance of laws (*Crito*, 51 d). The majesty of the State comes before the citizens. Thereupon, the State is a "concretely" necessary condition for the development and fulfillment of man's physical and psychic being. The law of solidarity between person and State eliminates every conflict. In cases of emergency, the judicial order requires the sacrifice of the citizen (Socrates). However, this means that man is not completely the servant of the power.[347]

Political structures are made up of a fourfold framework: origin, end, elements and form.

The State's *origin* is natural. At a certain point, a group of families cannot live together and be self-sufficient ("autarkés", *Republic*, 369 b); economic needs require a division and organisation of labour. Therefore, the remote origin is not contractual, but "natural" (as Aristotle will later state), in that nature gives various tasks according to various attitudes. Just as the variety of sexes generates the family, so the variety of tasks does not arise from a struggle, but from functional requirements (*Republic*, 455 d). Plato states, "Every citizen must practise only one activity of the many regarding civil life; that activity to which his natural inclination is most disposed" (*Republic*, 433 a). Hence a healthy and genuine "polis" arises. It grows through the addition of new families, and it enters into conflict with its counterparts. From the original union there, first of all, arise military powers ("phylakes") for defence, then political powers or first custodians ("àrchontes", *Republic*).[348]

The *end* of the State is general justice, while each of the three social classes pursue their own virtue: prudence for the heads, fortitude for warriors, temperance for the artisans. In other words, the purpose of the State is social and individual morality.[349] The ethical purpose is also manifested in the conception of communism of property and of women (proposed in the *Republic*, but rejected in the *Laws*), in a utopistic perspective which must be understood in its global ethical conception.

The doctrinal axis of the Laws moves from the virtue of prudence to that of temperance, resulting in a less heroic and more prosaic conception of life, with the enjoyment of individual economic goods.

Social Elements of the State: In the *Republic*, Plato constructs the State on three closed castes characterised, respectively, by wisdom, valour and wealth. However, in the *Laws*, the three classes are substituted by the family and by force and nobility, without any distinction. In this final dialogue, Plato draws a very interesting urban outline: the city must be constructed at least 15 kilometres from the ocean in order to avoid commerce, the source of corruption; the population of 5040 families is distributed partly in the urban centre and partly throughout 12 concentric peripheral suburbs, which open onto the countryside. In order to live, the prime occupation of the city will be agriculture. The lowest jobs are reserved to the slaves, who must be treated in a human fashion. There are communal holidays for marriages with eugenic ends. The family institution is regulated by precise norms, under the leadership of a magistrate who is to ensure that marriage is accessible to robust and valorous men. Marriage is obligatory for all those between 25 and 35 years of age (Book VII). There are particular norms regulating the defence of modesty (Book VI-VIII, 775), the banishment of decadent art (Book III), public tutelage of religion against atheism, irreligiosity and superstition (Book IX). Women are admitted (and even made equal to men) in political life.

A relevant question is that of real democracy. According to Stenzel, Plato's works do not show any vestige of historical influences. Plato did not prefer Sparta or Athens, but based himself on more ancient institutions. He theoretically distinguishes the libertarian Sophistic democracy from the just democracy of Socrates, where interior freedom is harmonised with and sometimes subordinate to the freedom of the State. Plato opposed Sophistic egalitarianism because it generates chaos. It strives for equality between the equal and the unequal, while true democracy recognises the inequality of tasks which arise from true democracy. In a true democracy, the individual possesses his own initiative, which is not the "mimesis" of the sheep who follow the same customs, nor the "pragmosyne", the anarchic and insipid versatility of the ancient democracies, but a true individual freedom.[350]

Formal Elements of the State and Forms of Government: *The* *authority of the State* is proposed in various versions by Plato. In the *Republic*, this authority is given to the philosophers, an elect race and living law. In the *Politicus*, Plato states that the absolute is not law (294 a–d), and hence an illuminated government without juridical order is possible. In such a case, the illuminated dictator acts as the captain, who looks out for the good of all on the ship without conforming to particular laws. Plato compares this illuminated dictator to the guardian and the physician, who even use violence against quarrelsome patients in order to cure them. Even though this man is outside the law, he is not illegal (297 a), because he is living justice. You may say that he is a despot! No, responds Plato, because he is at least as good as the law; law is the imitation of true politics.

In the *Laws*, power is entrusted to a constitutional monarchy and includes jurisdictional power, oratory activity (a parliament?) and an executive (Book VIII-X, etc.).

The forms of government in the *Republic* are pathological (Phoenician myth) and normal in the *Politicus*. In the *Republic* he proposes four decaying forms faulted with specific abuses: aristocracy (or Spartan timocracy, infected by ambition), oligarchy (plutocracy), demagogy (freedom and license) and tyranny (violence). The latter is the most inhuman form. Plato outlines an impressive figure for a tyrant: politically unfortunate, psychologically unhappy, metaphysically a monster. He is a chimera, half man and half lion (*Republic* IX).

In the *Politicus*, Plato outlines two categories or forms of government: those healthy and those corrupt. The healthy or legal forms derive from an ideal form, which is the aristocracy whence comes the dictator, king or politician. The legal forms are monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, while the illegal forms are demagogy, oligarchy and tyranny.

In the *Laws*, monarchy and aristocracy are moderated and founded on two social forces: authority and freedom. In the empire of the law, a maximum authority and a maximum freedom exist.

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4. *Platonic Aesthetics*

Aesthetics, or a philosophy of the beautiful, has a certain importance in Plato's thought. He was attracted to beauty by his artistic temperament (hence as a youth he composed hymns, poems and tragedies, as Diogenes Laërtius tells us in III, 5). He was also attracted by the Athenian environment, which Pericles made splendid, by his people and artists, who celebrated the genius of a nation in forms previously unknown.

Plato was not fascinated by natural beauty: murmuring waters, solitary and silent forests, and sombre mountains rarely appear in his dialogues. The beauty of the human body (*Phaedrus*, *Symposium*) is inferior and a participation; only the "eros" has the force to make man surpass this corporeal beauty toward a more temperate vision. This is less heroic and more prosaic vision of life, which includes the enjoyment of individual economic goods.

The beauty exalted by Plato is artistic: the epic, the lyric, the tragedy, the picture, the sculpture, etc. His dialogues themselves are true poetry, as Aristotle noted. Still, what were the canons that guided Plato to write and to become a critic and a philosopher of art?

The response is obvious: the idea is beautiful, since the closer the art becomes to the idea, the more beautiful it is. For Plato, art is also philosophical, since it is an "ideal". Working from this supreme principle, Plato distinguishes two artistic forms. The first are the anti-ideal and anti-philosophical forms which repudiate the idea. This anti-philosophical art is "a bitch that howls against her master and shrieks" (*Republic*, 607 b); it is a grotesque and repellent art, like the art of Homer, of the lyricists, of corrupt and corrupting comedy (*Republic*). This art is pure technique, formal abstraction, where stylistic rules prevail over inspiration, like the poetry of the rhapsodists and poetasters (*Ion*).

True art is a friend of the ideas; it is pure, inspired, Apollinear and a mosaic. Let us examine the two forms separately.

Apollinear Art: It is inspired, a "divine gift" (*Ion*, 536 d, 542 d), "divine power" (*ibid.*), "divine possession" (*ibid.*), a divinisation where the divinity uses the poet as an instrument. "God, in elevating the intelligence [of the poets] uses them as servants" (534 c), so it is not the bard, but God who speaks to men (534 c). The poet thus becomes a sacred, winged creature.

Authentic artistic inspiration is not a "téchne" nor an "epistéme", but a sacred enthusiasm which, like a magnet, communicates a mysterious fascination as it spreads from one link to another.

This high concept of inspiration expressed by Plato in the *Ion* is repeated in the *Symposium* and in the *Phaedrus*. Art is a "divine madness", and the artist is a "divine man" ("daimónios anér") dominated by a "divine pathos" ("theîon páthos"). Nevertheless, in his mature dialogues, inspiration has a slightly different tint. It is not merely a hyper-rational passivity, but also a creation and inventiveness (*Symposium*, 209 a).

Being contemplation, Apollinear art strives for the ideas, tends toward Good and is philosophical.

Dionysian Art: There is a depraved art which tends downward ("ánothen"), which gives diversion for the sake of diversion. It is infected with two maladies: a) metaphysically, it is mimetic. Therein, the false artist detaches himself from the ideas in three ways. He creates images of images. Moreover, instead of liberating himself and liberating art from the Dionysian whirlwind of passions, he exalts every kind of turpitude, unleashes hatred and incites war against the virtues. In Books I-III of the Republic, Plato stigmatises some tragic poets who have their heroes moan or laugh stupidly. In Book X he steps out against imitative art in the following terms. Reality in the strong sense are the ideas ("eîdos"); in an inferior sense, reality is the concrete thing in which the idea becomes individual in a species; finally, there is an apparent reality. Now, Dionysian art occupies itself with fantasies of the third grade because it decays into an imitation of an imitation. Painting, tragedies and epics (from Homer to the most recent authors: all are "creators of shadows") awaken the passions, bewitch with their sinister fascination, and "The listener with a timorous sense of the interior constitution of his soul will have to protect himself from the enchantment emanating [from corrupt art]" (*Republic*, 608 b). This art ruins man and makes him its slave.

Regarding music, Plato states that the Lydian and miso-Lydian tones are voluptuous and effeminate and thus must be banished from a State which is mindful of public morals. No harps, no violins, and no complex lyres for accompaniment, no passionate or licentious dancing (Book III, 399 ff.). The Doric and Phrigian tones are respected as those worthy of human nobility. The State must be the guarantor of a correct artistic education, for moral purposes as well (*Laws*, Book II). At this point, we should touch upon the great theme of Platonic education, into which we will not enter.

5. *The Doctrine of Ideas as a Hermeneutical Principle*

After having proposed the great architectural themes of Platonic philosophy, it is necessary to present a synthesis of the doctrine of ideas and the theology, which represent (as we said above, in part III, VII, para I) the hermeneutical principle, the formal or projectional aspect of construction. Plato from about 287 to 267 concentrated on the *existence* of the ideas; from 367 until his death he investigated their *nature*.

The existence of the ideas is not demonstrated directly by Plato, but is deduced from the confrontation of two types of knowledge: the sensible form, which is preceded by ignorance but is slowly determined through sensation, opinion, and motivated opinion. However, to enter the reign of the ideas and of the "episteme" means to make a qualitative leap to a distinct genus, whose truth derives from neither notions or names (*Cratylus*), nor from deduction, nor from an internal concordance and correspondence between action and thought, nor from the duration of an opinion or sensation (*Theaethetus*). It derives from its object, which is being (*Republic*, 477 b).[351]

The essence of the ideas is a debated question, and generally the entire interpretation of Platonic thought depends on the determination of this point. We may briefly state that the ideas are not abstraction of human thought, nor concepts, nor subsistent hypostases (Zeller). They are not substance-forces or efficient causes (Gomperz, Lutoslawski), or divine thoughts (as the neo-Platonists said), but absolute intelligibles similar to mathematical beings, but having their own invisible subsistence or reality, which is the foundation of the empirical reality. They are beings in the strong sense. Their existence rests outside space and time. In only one passage (in the *Phaedrus*) does Plato state that they inhabit the "Hyper-Uranus". In the *Phaedo*, they are called "that which is pure", "that which is being", "immortal being", "uniform", and belonging to only one species ("monoeidés", 78 d).

The ideas (as we said above in Part III, ch. VI, n. 6) a variety of surprising denominations are included in the Platonic vocabulary: ideas (a few times), "species" ("eidos"), that which is for itself ("kath'autò"), "the being which is in nature" (*Republic*, 597), substance ("ousia"), paradigm, "monoeides" (uniform), "that which is common" ("tò hoinòn"), being ("tò ón"), "monad", etc.

To sum up, the idea implies two concepts: autonomous existence and independence from the material world.

Relations of the ideas with each other: there is an *external notional relation* which is traced by minor descending dialectics (as we have already said). The more important thing is the *internal relation*, which is both logical and ontological, as we have seen in the *Sophistes* and in other dialogues with a prevalence of ascending dialectics (*Republic*, *Symposium*), where Good is the cause of being, and Beauty is the wellspring of inferior (even spiritual) beauties. These relations are called participation, imitation, communion, presence (parousia), adhesion, approach. Following Lutoslawski, I simplify this scheme:

1) PAROUSIA – presence of one idea with respect to another = Transcendence

2) MIMESIS (imitation) = Exemplarity
3) METEXIS (participation) = Immanence
4) KOINONIA (communion) or SYMPLOKE' = Notionality

At one moment the ideas find themselves in a position of confrontation (parousia), subordination and transcendence; in another moment they are in a state of similarity, which is an *exterior communion* of "mimesis". Other times they are in a state of *interior communion* or "metexis", in a cause-effect relation, or in a state of predicability or communion of logical implication or "notionality" (cfr. above, Part III, ch. VI, n. 6).

Relations of Ideas with Things: As we have said before, from about 387 to 367 Plato detaches his mind from material things, almost ignoring them for the sake of flying toward the ideas. But in the *Parmenides*, *Sophistes* and *Philebus*, he descends from the supreme idea to other ideas, and from these other ideas to things, to the sensible reality which "wishes to be" and "desires to be" true reality, without possessing its fullness. In the *Timaeus* he attempts to connect the ideas with matter, placing the geometric ideas of the four elements in matter. The result was failure because the union did not take place. It was Aristotle who said that there is an idea in the matter and that the idea is not a geometric form or an ideal form, but a formal intrinsic principle.

6. *Platonic Theology as a Hermeneutical Principle*

Plato has recently been considered a theologian even before he was a philosopher (Sciacca), as well as a religious reformer (Diès). This is not incorrect, because if the doctrine of ideas is principal constituent of his philosophy, then theology is the culmination of his thought. In the *Laws*, almost as if to correct Protagoras, he solemnly declares that "God is the measure of all things", and in the Republic he says that "God is not the cause of all, but of good" (*Republic*, 380 c).[352]

However, a profound examination of the question of divinity in Plato is not easy. To what point is the doctrine of ideas to be identified with the theology? And what should we say of the "unwritten doctrines" that some contemporary researchers would want to elevate to such a point that they obscure the religiously intense pages of the *Republic*, *Timaeus* and *Laws*? Was his religion Greek or Orphic?

We begin with the last difficulty. Plato – according to Feiblemann – was a follower of Orphism, which was not a Greek religion. Hence we reach the conclusion that Platonic philosophy was not Greek.[353] However, this thesis seems excessive: there are no arguments which demonstrate that Plato, although he borrowed some elements from Pythagorean doctrines, moved away from the Greek religious vision he learned from his family and from his contacts with Socrates. At any rate, Orphism should not be identified with Pythagoreanism (Part I, ch. II, n. 4), nor can it be said that Greek thought had a materialistic character. On the contrary, it has often been stated that Greek philosophy was born and developed in collaboration with religion. The second point to confront regards the position of Platonic philosophy with the so-called "unwritten doctrines" which were mentioned above (cfr. Part III, Ch. 4, n. 3). Some (for instance, the Tübingen school) believe that true Platonic philosophy is not the one contained in the well-known texts, but rests in the teachings handed down through the living tradition of the school, which are only slightly visible in his disciples or in some of his dialogues.

According to this theory, we would need to distinguish the categorial number from the transcendental – that is, to distinguish the mathematical number applied to the quantity from the number applied to the divine. Plato recognises the divine character of the latter ("theîon") and of the idea, even if they can sometimes be reduced ("anágein", as Theophrastus states, *Metaphysics* 6 b 11–14) to the mathematical number. However, numbers are not principles of things, because, as D. Ross explains,[354] there are two fundamental principles above the numbers: the "dyad" (or indeterminate "ápeiron") and the One ("Hén").[355] In this case, the principles of reality of the "exoteric" Plato would be illustrated in this order:

ONE
IDEAS
TRANSCENDENTAL NUMBERS or IDEA-NUMBERS
INDETERMINATE DYAD

The One would be the Monad, whence ineffably arises the dyad. This latter, being the unity of opposites, contains infinite numbers, or the Demiurge.

In this perspective, Platonic theology would oscillate between the absolute monism of the One and the absolute dualism of the Dyad. The One could be identified with Good in the *Republic*, as if a mysterious thread were to bind the doctrine of Good to the exoteric teaching of the One.

However, this interpretation encounters various difficulties: a) how can we believe that Plato substituted the Demiurge with the idea-number gifted with "dynamis"?;[356] b) second, the identification of Good with the One was performed by Xenocrates; c) third, the One as an absolute entity does not seem to be a Pythagorean teaching, but can be correlated with the "állo", the world; d) fourth, the monad appeared in the fifth century in late Pythagoreanism, through the work of Philolaus (Diels, B 8). Consequently, Plato (it seems) borrowed some later Pythagorean doctrines, but he did not renounce the primacy of the ideas and of Good over the number; e) above all, one does not understand how the Demiurge could be identified with the totality of the ideas-numbers; in other words, how the efficient cause could be identified with the exemplary cause.

Hence we arrive at the third point: the relation between the ideas and God, which, in the case of the *Timaeus*, is the Demiurge.

Following the neo-Platonists, many authors state that the ideas are divine thoughts, and that the *Timaeus* would be the centre of Platonic theology, insofar as there the ideas are not distinct from the Demiurge.

For example, A. Manno holds that the Good of the *Republic* is the idea, the exemplar, the "cosmos noetós" of the neo-Platonists, which in the Timaeus becomes the Demiurge's object of thought,[357] the reflections or thought of the divine Moulder. However, this thesis does not seem to be correct, in that God in the *Republic* is above the ideas, and in the *Timaeus* the Demiurge cannot alter the relations between the ideas. Hence the question: who is God? The ideas, or the Demiurge? Is God the idea of Good in the *Republic*, the idea of Beauty in the *Symposium*, the idea of Being in the *Parmenides* and *Sophistes*, the Ideas in the *Timaeus*? Or is he, instead, the Demiurge?

Note that in some passages Plato seems to identify being with thought; for example, in *Sophistes*, it is stated that thought ("noûs") is attributed to the "total being" ("pantelôs òn", 248 e – 249 a). However, Plato probably wished to say only that thinking is a form of being. In general (as we read in the *Republic*, 517 c) it is the idea of Good which generates truth and being, and not vice versa.

To conclude, Plato (as F. M. Sciacca observed) found himself faced with a dilemma: either cosmological theism, or an impersonal deism of the "divinum". That is, Plato proposed a personal God (the Demiurge), but in a cosmological perspective, and not as a reward for the immortal soul. Sometimes he proposes a divine, intelligible, impersonal and anonymous god, who would be certainly worthy of man's contemplation. However, this intelligible is pantheistic. "What is metaphysical," one Italian philosopher said, "is not theological, since it lacks a personality; what is theological is not metaphysical, since it lacks absoluteness".[358] We would say that the *Thought* divine thought (Ideas) is not to be identified with the *Thinking* divine thought (Demiurge). It was the neo-Platonists who completed this great operation, which later passed into Christian theology. However, in Plato the division does not seem to have been overcome.

However, this arduous operation must not allow us to draw a veil over the more important themes which Plato outlined with a sure hand, those regarding God and religion.

First of all, Plato considered abhorrent the philosophical atheism which negated an order and an end to the world (*Philebus*, *Sophistes*). A summary examination of the physical world, of individual beings and their functions, does not at all lead to the theory that everything was made by chance (*Timaeus*, *Laws*). It would then be necessary to say that all artistic masterpieces and human political organisation are the fortuitous fruit of irrational coincidence. This is also reflected in politics: the assertion that religion and morals are arbitrary or relative creations which are variable from State to State is not only impious, but also false (*Theaethetus*), even if it is made in the name of the baying bitch of false poetry. They are all wrong, from Homer to Hesiod, Musaeus and Orpheus, which make the universe derive from blind and irrational principles, such as chaos, night, emptiness, etc. It must be prohibited to teach about these philosophers and poets. Philosophically, they are the source of pseudo-science (*Laws*, 886, "amathia") and imbecility ("anoéte dóxa", *Ibid.*, 891 c). To this wicked progeny also belong – Plato says – the creators of myths (Timaeus, 40 dc). The fundamental error is that of not admitting the ontological and chronological primacy of the spirit ("psyché", "noûs", "theîon") over matter ("physis"). Regarding the existence of the divinity, Plato considers the visible world to be a great ladder in which the divine rises in quality: from inanimate beings to living beings, to man, heroes, gods, and finally the Ideas. This type of pantheism is tempered by the grades of being: the visible world is a supreme god within its order; but it, in turn, is subordinate to the "total being" (*Sophistes*), to the "totally living" (*Timaeus*, "pantelôs zôon"), which is the intelligible God. If God is a collective word applied to the entire universe, then Plato still remains firm in the thought that things without divinity would be nothing (*Timaeus*, 53 a–b).

The proofs for the existence of God are: order (*Laws*, 886 a, 966 e), the end of the universe (*Laws*, 890 and 892), and movement (*Laws*, 895).

Plato declares his disgust for these proofs, which would be superfluous if it were not for the people who "in every time are affected by the malady of "atheism" (888 c); that is, for those who are professed atheists, or who negate providence, or consider the gods to be merciful and incapable of punishing.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ARISTOTLE

1. *Aristotle's Life*

Chalcidica is a peninsula in southern Greece which extends southward at three points into the Aegean Sea, giving the impression of forming three fingers. The most easterly of the protrusions was colonised by the Ionians, who apparently founded the city of Stageira on that land, a place whose eastern location exposed it to the cold north winds. It was there that Aristotle was born in 383 B.C. into a family of physicians. His father Nicomachus (who served as physician for Amyntas III, predecessor to Alexander the Great) died during Aristotle's youth. After the father's death, his brother-in-law Proxenus took him to Atarneus in Asia Minor, and at the age of 17 Aristotle was sent to the Academy to continue the studies he had begun at home. The year was 367, during Plato's absence, when the master had travelled to Sicily on the invitation of the younger Dionysius after the death of the elder Dionysius. Aristotle's first professor was the thirty-year-old Eudoxus, who had remained at the Academy as the school director in Plato's place. Eudoxus was responsible for the school's expansion into the fields of astronomy, geography and morals. In 365–364 Plato returned to Athens to once again take charge of the Academy. We know little of young Aristotle's formation at the hands of the Athenian master, who at that time had begun his re-examination of the entire doctrine of ideas. Although Plato was also involved in politics (as later events demonstrated in Sicily), Plato realised that he had an exceptional disciple; various anecdotes recount how the youth was called by the teacher (who was forty-five years older) "the mind". "the clear intelligence", or "the reader".[359] Aristotle apparently soon became a teacher of rhetoric.

In the meantime, Macedonian politics had unsettled the Athenians. In 357 Philip had conquered the northern Athenian colony of Amphipolis, and in 349 he also captured Olinth. The anti-Macedonian party, led by the great orator Demosthenes, made life much more difficult for Aristotle, who was a Macedonian and bound to the court of Pella, the nation's capital city. It was easy and understandable to consider him an agent of Philip's expansionism. And so in 347 (perhaps after Plato's death in that year) he left the Academy, which had been entrusted to Plato's nephew Speusippus, a Philo-Macedonian older than Aristotle who nonetheless belonged to an aristocratic athenian family.

Aristotle was invited to Atarneus, where perhaps the young philosopher had lived a few years. Hermias, the ruler of that area, had succeeded in founding a principality of the two Ionian coastal cities, Assos and Atarneus. The ruler was a man of high ideals and promoter of cultural causes, and had invited two of his scholarly friends, Coriscus and Erastus, from Athens. Hence when Aristotle arrived there with Xenocrates, Assos was becoming a centre of learning. There Aristotle met Theophrastus of Eresus (island of Lesbos), who became Aristotle's faithful disciple and successor at the Peripatetic school. Hermias, a supporter of Philip's pan-Hellenic politics, was suspected of conspiring against the dominant Persians of the area. The Persians intercepted a letter of his to Philip, captured him, took him to Babylonia, tortured and crucified him. Aristotle, who had married his daughter Pythias, expressed his pain in a noble dithyramb, and to escape difficulty travelled in 345–344 to Mitylene, the capital of the island of Lesbos, where he founded a philosophical school. From here he was invited to be the teacher of the thirteen-year-old prince Alexander, son of Philip; he left the island and travelled to Macedonia, probably in 342.

Little is known of Aristotelian educative style and orientation. This lack of knowledge was due to the short duration of the teacher's tenure (no more than two years), the character of the prince, who was inclined toward ambition and cruelty, and their different visions of Greek destiny. Aristotle (like Isocrates and Plato before him) believed in the superiority of the Greeks and their vocation to dominate the barbarians. Alexander, instead, having become a world conqueror, favoured the racial and cultural fusion of conquered peoples. Aristotle prepared a special edition of the *Iliad* for the young prince, and perhaps it was in this period that he studied literary (*Iliad Homeric Difficulties*, *The Poets*) and political questions (*The Kingdom*). However, historians agree in not attributing any friendship or mistrust to the two geniuses. In 340 Alexander was declared ruler of the Macedonian kingdom, freeing Aristotle from any responsibility for him.

It was during this Macedonian period that Aristotle travelled to Delphi with his nephew Callisthenes and composed a list of the winners of the Pythian games from research archives. He visited his native Stageira, which had been rebuilt after Philip's destruction, and continued on to Selembria near the Bosphorus. In 336 a court intrigue led to the death of Philip at Pella; this news gave great hope for Greeks who wished to free themselves from Macedonian domination. However, Alexander swooped down on Thebes, the most unsettled city, levelled it and declared himself the absolute master of all Hellenic lands. Then he left with 30,000 men for the Bosphorus in an attempt to conquer Asia. Aristotle was able to return to Athens; here began the third period of his scientific and philosophical activity, which continued until 323, when upon Alexander's death he moved to Chalcis on the island of Euboea. Here he died at the age of 63, leaving a last testament which was a monument to cultivation and humanity. One of his children, Nicomachus, had already died some years earlier. Biographies describe Aristotle as having a slight stutter, bald, short of stature, with sunken eyes and a tendency to suffer stomach disturbances. In the *Anonymous Life* it was added that he was a man of great equilibrium, who took great care in trimming his beard, wore rings and dressed elegantly. He wasted no words, but his most effective weapon was irony.

Still, he (as Düring observed)[360] was not greeted joyously upon his return to Athens, nor was he considered a great philosopher. He was a professor from a strange land, surrounded by some faithful disciples, such as Neleus, Eudemus of Rhodes and Theophrastus (who developed and led the Peripatetic school until 287). Still, he had many enemies: Isocrates taught a pragmatic and formal rhetoric, not the philosophical one supported by Aristotle.[361] Political hatred for his support of Antipatrus, the Macedonian ruler, remained. He battled with the Megarians, especially with Eubulides, who launched personal attacks against Aristotle. Even his relations with the Academy were not good. At any rate, Aristotle had criticised Plato even during his youth, while the master was still alive. The disagreements grew with the arrival of Plato's successors Speusippus and Xenocrates, and they even existed with Heraclides, leader of the Academy during Plato's last voyage to Sicily.[362]

Aristotle's most bitter posthumous enemies were the Epicureans, who defamed him still in ancient times (Diogenes Laërtius V, 4) with accusations of indecency, impiety and vulgarity;[363] this was probably the result of envy. The most ferocious attacker was probably Hermarchus, who wrote a defamation entitled *Against Aristotle*.

Regarding the Peripatetic school, the place of "public square" where Aristotle taught (although he did not establish an efficiently run institution), it was Theophrastus who established a garden and buildings. Still, Aristotle was doubtless an avid researcher who sought works for the school library, and according to tradition he gathered over a hundred pergamenes, perhaps aided by Alexander himself.

The Peripatetic school sustained serious damage in 86 B.C., during Silla's attack on Athens; later it was rebuilt and existed until the third century A.D., when neo-Platonism unified the various schools in existence at the time in a single teaching.

2. *Aristotle's Works*

The generations have provided us with a body of works attributed to Aristotle called the *Corpus aristotelicum.* This anthology includes 46 miscellaneous works, which can be summarily divided into four groups: a) philosophical works (logic, cosmology, metaphysics, aesthetics, ethics); b) scientific works (treatises on biology and meteorology); c) works of literary critique (rhetoric); and d) political works (*Politics and the Constitution of the Athenians*). The latter Constitution was only discovered in the nineteenth century and was probably part of an anthology of 136 constitutions of that epoch which served as a research and educational guide.[364]

However, doubts about Aristotle's authorship of all these works were expressed as far back as the fourteenth century, when the first claims were made that the Corpus aristotelicum is spurious.[365] According to Düring, the works with an uncertain origin are the following: *The Sounds* (literally, *About Listenable Things*), *Virtues and Evils*, *Indivisible Letters*, *Historia animalium VII–IX*, *Curiosities* (literally, *Astounding Stories*), *De Mundo*, *Metaphysics* (*Book Kappa*), *Mechanics*, *Xenophanes*, *Zeno*, *Gorgias*, *Economics*, *Spirit* (*Peri pnéumatos*), *Problems*, *Alexander's Rhetorics*, *Physiognomy*, *De Plantis* and *De coloribus.*[366]

This does not end the discussion. In addition to the 46 titles contained in the *Corpus aristotelicum*, we also have three other catalogues: the first from Diogenes Laërtius; the second one anonymous (perhaps from Hesichius) contained in the so-called "Menagian Life" (thus titled because it was edited in the seventeenth century by the French physician Menage); the third from a certain Ptolemy of Chennos (not the geographer!) from the first century A.D which reached us only through two twelfth-century Arab writings, *Chronicles of the Wise Men* of Ibn al Qifti

(1172–1248) and *History of Physicians* of Ibn Abi Useibi (died 1236). The third catalogue (in the opinion of the specialist P. Moraux)[367] reproduces a list produced by Ariston of Ceos, a scholar at the Peripatetic school in 230–210 B.C.

The three catalogues differ in the number of works (146, 191 and 55, respectively), in the sources (the first two are from Ariston of Ceos, while the third – with some alterations – is from Andronicus of Rhodes, the great grammarian who brought with him the Aristotelian tradition of his island and lived in Rome in 50–20 B.C.), and in the titles themselves, especially since some catalogues do not mention at all works which we possess (for example, the *Metaphysics* does not appear in the first catalogue, while in the second it is listed as having 10 books, not the 14 we have today and which are listed in the third catalogue).

An even stranger fact is that the first catalogue does not correspond with our *Corpus aristotelicum*. This means that in the third and second centuries B.C. two official catalogues of Aristotle's works were extant, not counting copies of the works which Eudemus took to Rhodes from Athens after his teacher's death. According to Düring (and this seems plausible to me), an initial catalogue was compiled by Theophrastus, which was taken with the entire library to Alexandria by Strato (educator and mentor of Ptolemy Philadelphus). The other catalogue, or anthology of writings, has a more complex history (recounted by Strabo and Plutarch); Neleus, son of Coriscus and a disciple of the Peripatetic school, returned to his homeland of Skepsis after Theophrastus died in 287 at the age of 70, taking with him the personal works of the Teacher which (as we read in the last testament, Diogenes Laërtius V, 52) were used by the school. It seems that Neleus was not particularly intelligent, much less his descendants, who hid the precious scrolls in a filthy cellar.

Hence we have four places of preservation: Athens, Skepsis, Rhodes and Alexandria. However, when Julius Caesar gave the order in 47 B.C. to transfer the majority of the Alexandrian library to Rome, the ship carrying the books burned, destroying the

40,000 works, among them Aristotle's works. Some works were probably preserved in Athens and Rhodes. In the first century B.C. Athens and Rome were the scene of events which led to Aristotle's regaining his celebrity and glory. Appelicon of Teos (an Aegean island), a rich and adventurous bibliophile, managed around 90 to discover the scrolls hidden by Neleus, purchased them for a high price and took them to Athens, where he edited them (incorrectly). In 86, Silla conquered Athens after a long siege, imprisoned Appelicon and appropriated his precious cache of books and works of art. At the time Tyrannio was living in Rome as a prisoner of Lucullus; he was treated benevolently and placed himself at the disposition of the leading Roman scholars of that period, such as Atticus, Cicero and Andronicus of Rhodes. When Silla died in 46, Andronicus received Aristotle's works, and in 40–20 B.C. he edited an anthology (perhaps to be distributed to Athens and Alexandria as well). Still, the criteria for the edition were Hellenistic. The works were distributed according to an almost canonical order of logic, ethics and physics, and titles and systems were imposed in such a way as to create a perfect philosophical system.

Moreover, Andronicus imposed a singular interpretation on all the writings he possessed at the time. Those coming from Silla were called "acroamatic", or auditory, those meant for teaching at the Peripatetic school. However, since Aristotle himself in the acroamatic works mentioned "different works, called "lógoi exoterikoí'" (*Nicomachean Ethics* I, 13, 1102 a 29), Andronicus believed that all the works not contained in Silla's collection were to be identified with dialogues, works meant for the general public.[368] Andronicus was not entirely incorrect: Cicero was able to read both the dialogues (which he praised for their exceptional "aureum eloquentiae flumen") and the scientific works probably originating in Skepsis (where he claimed to have found obscurities and stylistic difficulties).

This interpretation was accepted in later centuries with the help of the neo-Platonists, and in recent times was reconsidered by many authors, among them Werner Jäger. Whatever the value of this interpretation may be, one thing is certain: from the first century B.C. through the third and fourth centuries A.D., these two groups of Aristotelian works preserved their individual systems and credibility.

The "exoteric" works (as we will call the non-scholastic books) were read until the third and fourth centuries, and it seems that the last people to read them were Alexander of Aphrodisias (second and third centuries A.D.) and Iamblichus (third and fourth centuries A.D.). The "acroamatic" works remained and were the subject of precise and detailed comments. Because these latter were precise works constructed as treatises, they required minute philological and comparative analyses. From what we have outlined, we can trace the strange history of Aristotle's works in the following sketch:

EXOTERIC WORKS	ACROAMATIC WORKS
Fourth century B.C. Written for the public, before and after 335	Works written for the school, mostly after 335
Third-first centuries B.C. Aristotle's great literary glory	A Majority of the works remain hidden in Skepsis
First century B.C. The glory and good fortune of the exoteric works continue	The hidden scrolls are recovered from after 200 years
Second-fourth centuries A.D. Final studies and imitations by Iamblichus and final loss of works	Beginning of the great commentaries on the "treatises" (Alexander of Aphrodisias, Philoponus, Asclepius and Simplicius in the sixth century)
Seventh – twelfth centuries Lost	In the Latin West, Aristotle is known only through the logical works translated by. Boethius. The study of Aristotle continues in Athens and Constantinople. Photius is one of his best commentators in the tenth century. There is an account that Pope Paul I sent to Pipinus, king of France, some of Aristotle's works in Greek.[369]

Thirteenth – seventeenth centuries Lost	Triumph of Aristotle in the West with the Arabs and Latins (Averroists).
Seventeenth – nineteenth centuries: Lost	Reconsideration of Platonism with the School of Florence; fall of Aristotle.
Nineteenth and twentieth centuries: Attempts at reconstruction through quotes from Greek authors of the "Lost Aristotle": Rose (1886), Walzer (1934), Ross (1955), Düring (1955), Wilpert (1955) and Plezia (1960).	Genetic study of Aristotle and reconsideration of peripatetic philosophy with the advent of neo-Thomism and existentialism.[370]

3. Review of the exoteric works

A brief presentation of the exoteric works begins with the exclusion of two extremist theories: one of Joseph Zürcher (*Aristoteles Werk und Geist*, Paderborn 1952) for whom the *Corpus aristotelicum* was almost entirely written at the Peripatetic School in 317–290 B.C., mostly by Theophrastus. Obviously, the "exoteric" works would then be his only authentic writings, but they would belong to an Aristotle who was a "reformer of Platonism" from the very beginning (*Ibid.*, pp. 20–26).

The other thesis belongs to Werner Jäger (*Aristoteles, Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung*, Berlin 1935, second edition translated into Italian, Florence 1955), who states that the exoteric works were written only before the final period of Athenian teaching, from 362 through 335 B.C. Hence they are called "dialogues" (in that they were written using Platonic models), "exoteric" (in that they were written for people outside the Peripatetic School), and "Platonic works" (Plutarch's term, referring to the fact that their lineaments were closely bound with Platonic doctrine).[371] Simplicius, when referring to *De Philosophia* (one of the lost dialogues) uses the expression "enkyklia philosophémata perì tà theîa", or "philosophical teachings for the public on divinity". This phrase is also found in the acroamatic work *De Coelo* I, 9, 279 e 30–33.

The two theories are excessive for opposite reasons. The former excludes the entire current Corpus aristotelicum from Aristotelian philosophy, leaving us only with Peripatetic, not Aristotelian, philosophy. The second theory ends by stating that Aristotle proposed two philosophies: one for the general public during his youth, more or less faithful to Plato; the other anti-Platonic, with a positivistic and almost atheistic orientation.

Thereupon, we state that the "exoteric" works do not differ substantially from the "acroamatic" ones (which today are sometimes called "esoteric" as well, from the Greek "eiso"–inside), and we further do not exclude the possibility that Aristotle wrote exoteric works while he taught in Athens after 335 B.C. This we will discuss in more detail later.[372] However, we do admit that Aristotle cannot be considered a systematic philosopher who possessed a definitively established doctrine from the beginning. In this area one should give a great deal of credit to W. Jäger for having renewed the study of historical methodology[373] in determining the chronology and spirit of Aristotle's works.

In 361, Aristotle wrote his first literary work, the *Gryllus*, in honour of Xenophon's son of that name who had died a heroic death a year earlier in Mantinea. It seems that this dialogue was a conceptual rhetorical exercise written in a polemic form against Socrates' rhetorical school. According to Moraux, in 454–453 Aristotle wrote *Eudemus* and *Protrepticus*, two dialogues or dissertations written in a Platonic style. However, this imitation of the dialogues must be carefully understood; generally, these works contained a religious spirit and cathartic conception of life (already visible in the *Timaeus* and *Laws*). However, in their literary form, the works of the two authors were profoundly different. Gone were maieutics aş a method of research, long discourses and the plastic figures of myth. Jäger states, "The dramatic scenes of eristic battles and the framework of the 'lógoi' had been replaced by long investigations and theoretical demonstrations, proceeding in definitively methodological ways."[374] Aristotle ws the founder of the scientific dialogue, in which he speaks in the first person.

The *Eudemus*, insofar as we can tell from the few remaining fragments, perhaps imitated Plato's *Phaedo* (Düring excludes this dialogue) both in its object (the eternity of the soul) and its in literary technique. Eudemus, a former disciple of Plato, a friend of Aristotle and more a politician than a philosopher, was captured and imprisoned by the tyrant Alexander of Pherae in Thessalia. Here he became ill, but in a dream a mysterious youth prophesies three events to him: he will be cured, return to his homeland of Cyprus, and the tyrant will die. The prophesies came true (Aristotle recounts), including the return to his homeland . . . because in a battle at Syracuse Eudemus died, while he was returning to Cyprus. His homeland is heaven.[375]

The dialogue shows the same negative character of the *Phaedo*: on the earth man cannot reach good, and the greatest good is not to be born. This renewed "meléte thanátou" leads to the proof of the soul's immortality through the arguments "ex contrariis" and "ex reminiscentia". Aristotle adds a new criterion, "ex divinatione". The soul is prophetic, hence it is immortal. The dialogue also rejects the theory of the soul as harmony.

The *Protrepticus* was a much-read dialogue in ancient times. It was quoted in the fourth century B.C. by the Cynic Crates and in the second century A.D by Alexander of Aphrodisias. Still, it was only in 1896 that I. Bywater (*On a Lost Dialogue of Aristotle*) first attempted to study it, based on the work of the same name by the neo-Platonic Iamblichus from the fourth century A.D. (although Iamblichus reached a contrary conclusion). After this philologist, many attempted similar studies, among them E. Bignone, W. Jäger (in the above-mentioned work) and R. Walzer in his edition of fragments (*Aristotelis dialogorum fragmenta*, Florence 1934, reprinted 1962). The most enthusiastic researcher in this area was Ingemar Düring, in his *Aristotle's Protrepticus: An Attempt at Reconstruction*, Goteburg 1961 (synthesised in his above-mentioned *Aristoteles, Darstellung und Interpretation*, pp. 444–489). The results would be as follows: the dialogue was written for a certain Themison prince of Cyprus, in order to exhort him to a life of wisdom. In reality, Aristotle had two goals concealed behind this dedication: to exhort youth to authentic philosophy, and to vigorously refute the false concept of wisdom, which was proposed by Isocrates and his school in the *Antidosis*, or *On Exchange*. The date of the work would be around 353–351. In this work Aristotle, albeit inspired by the Platonic idea of good as a human goal, insisted on affirming that even if "nature" (physis") is the object of imitation by man in general (from which he arrives at the arts), it is still true that the philosopher does not imitate nature, but raises himself to pure thought and makes this thought the goal of his life. This would be the interpretation of a passage from Alexander of Aphrodisias: either one philosophises or one does not philosophise. If one philosophises, then one philosophises; if one does not philosophise, then it is still necessary to philosophise. Therefore, philosophy is at all costs necessary.

This interpretation of Düring was rejected by Rabonowitz;[376] however, the difference between the theses of Bignone-Jäger (affirming a pessimistic "bios theoretikos") and the more rationalistic one of Düring is almost irrelevant. Only the motivations differ. We should note that the Protrepticus was responsible three times for a renewal of philosophy: in Cicero, Augustine and Boethius, as Bignone (*op. cit.*, p. 91) and Jäger have written.

Good, The Ideas: These are two youthful works which have reached us only in their titles and in a few references in the *Metaphysics*. They were read by Alexander of Aphrodisias. In the opinion of Wilpert[377] and later of H. J. Krämer (*Arete bei Platon und Aristoteles, Zum Wesen und zur Geschichte der platonischen Ontologie*, bh. Heid. Ak. d. Wiss., Phil. hist. Kl., 1959), it was here that Aristotle for the first time declared his open dissent with Plato on the problem of the ideas, around the years 352–350.

Justice: This is another lost work of which we only possess the title, written in Athens around 348. Paul Moreau states that some ideas from this dialogue were reconsidered in the *Eudemian Ethics* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*, as well as in some Hellenistic authors. The work, made up of four books, was based on Plato's *Republic* (cfr. Paul Moreau, *A la recherche de l' Aristote perdu, Le dialogue Sur la justice*, *op. cit.*, *passim.*).

De Philosophia: This is the most important of the lost works because it was written as a programmatic work at a time when Aristotle, probably at Assos in 345, began his vast reforms of themes and methods.

The opinions on this work from the many reconstructors of the dialogue are varied. For example, Paul Wilpert ("Die aristotelische Schrift: Über die Philosophie", in *Autour d' Aristote*, Louvain 1955, pp. 99–116) holds that this dialogue was not written at Assos, but in Athens before Plato's death. Therefore, he states that it cannot be believed that Aristotle was awaiting the death of his teacher in order to attack him, since Aristotle dissented with his mentor while they were still both alive. Hence it must also be stated that this dialogue was written before the works dealing with good and the ideas; the latter was a most Platonic work, where the subject of the ideas is not substantially questioned (except in some secondary aspects).

On the contrary, Düring states that this work is essentially hostile to Plato, as were all his successive works. Hence this work was written together with Book VIII of the *Physics* and *De Mundo*, or at least they were written with similar concepts, since they state that celestial bodies are animate and that an analogy exists between the inferior and superior worlds of the cosmos. Hence the "eternal bodies" of the superior world would be the "first body" and possess a soul and life.[378] Likewise, W. Jäger supposes that *De Philosophia* was a work which clearly dissented from Plato, was dated around 347, and was a kind of manifesto for a new philosophy. Leaving aside the discussions on the date and character of the work, we know that it included three parts: a) historic, b) polemic and c) theoretical.

In the first part, Aristotle traced the origins of philosophy, going back to Thales, the Egyptians and the magicians (among them Zoroaster). This was the first attempt to connect Greek and eastern philosophy. In the second part, he rejects the doctrine of the ideas, and in the third he proposes his vision of the world. The world is an eternal and divine living being (this rejects the *Timaeus* both in the ideas and in the work of the Demiurge), above all because of the stars. This probably reflected the influence of the Platonic *Laws* and the *Epimonides*, a spurious Platonic work. Aristotle then went on to a demonstration of God's existence: "*ex divinatione*" (the dying Patroclus predicts the death of Hector, as Hector predicts Achilles' death); "*ex ordine*" (the world is an ordered living being, and hence there exists a being that ordered it);[379] and "*ex gradibus perfectionum*", which is similar to the fourth Thomistic way. If there exists a better in things ("tò béltion"), then there must also exist a best ("tò àriston"). Aristotle followed this major proposition with the syllogistic minor: among beings ("ónta") there exists a better. Therefore, there exists the Best, which is divinity ("tò theîon") (fragment 21). Therefore, Pepin is correct when he states that "his [Aristotle's] discourse elaborated in the form of theology" (as Hippolytus of Rome states in his *Refutation of all Heresies* VII, 19, 4) refers to *De Philosophia*[380] (cfr. also L. Alfonsi, "Motivi tradizionali del giovane Aristotele in Clemente Alessandrino e in Atenagora", in *Vigiliae Christianae*, 7, 1951, pp. 129–142).

CHAPTER NINE

THE EVOLUTION OF ARISTOTELIAN THOUGHT

1. *The Spirit of Aristotelian Philosophy*

Obviously, a study of Aristotle's philosophy cannot begin only with the few and uncertain fragments of his lost works available to us. Therefore, we seek to understand his philosophy through the *Corpus aristotelicum*, excluding those works which seem to have been edited by his disciples or his school (see above).

A first approach to his philosophy regards its character, or – as we hear more frequently today – its spirit, which (in my opinion) includes four fundamental points: the detachment from Platonic philosophy, the philosophical method, the evolution of his thought, and the meaning of his philosophy. These are four intimately bound characteristics which project themselves in various rays emanating from the single light of the totality of Aristotelian philosohy.

The first problem regards his philosophy's development and doctrinal evolution.

We have already observed above (Part III, Ch. VIII, n. 2) that Andronicus of Rhodes had imposed a systematic character on the order of Aristotle's books (already published by Appelicon). The result is a philosopher whose thought flows outward like a winged Minerva, the encyclopaedic thought of an organic and perfect genius. This type of Aristotle was commented on from the third through the sixth centuries A.D., working from an assumption of his systematic teaching. Every time the texts presented some contradictions or obscurity, then one of the passages was removed. With the advent of neo-Platonism, Aristotle was considered a Platonic thinker, and hence commentators concentrated on the agreement and harmony of the two philosophers. Consequently, no one took into account the patent differences and opposition of Aristotle to his teacher.

When Plato was rediscovered and studied anew in thirteenth-century Europe, this question appeared again, albeit subtly at first. Later, in the sixteenth century, when Plato regained the interest of European universities (with the exception of Padua, which remained the last fortress of Averroism, with figures like Pietro d'Abano, Patrizi and Pomponazzi), some philologists discredited Aristotle (Ramus, Gassendi in 1624, Gonetus in 1630, etc.). Still, the question remained open. In 1788 the German Bühle first raised the question (it seems), but with little result. The higher official culture and the undebatable authority of Zeller, Bernays and Rose combined to keep the traditional ideas intact and to refer even more zealously to the system of eliminations, later insertions, obscurities of texts, etc.

It was only in 1896 that Covotti, and later the Englishman Case (1911) raised some doubts and began to admit the presence of two versions of Aristotle, one Platonic and one Peripatetic. Finally, after long research, Jäger peremptorily proposed his thesis on Aristotle's evolution. His most famous work (*Aristotele, Lineamenti di una storia del suo sviluppo*, cited above, in Part III, Ch. VIII, n. 3) proposed the *genetic* or *evolutionary thesis*, which distinguished three periods: a) *the Platonic period*, from 367–347, when Aristotle questioned the theory of the ideas while generally preserving the mystical and idealistic character of his teacher; b) *the period of voyages* or *critical period*, which began with *De Philosobia* in 345 and continued until 335, when Aristotle corrected the more Platonic parts of his preceding philosophy by writing anti-Platonic passages; and c) the period when he dedicated himself to writing treatises of a *positivistic* and less spiritual character, to the point where he concluded his work in an almost agnostic tone. For example, the *Metaphysics*, in Jäger's opinion, manifests all three periods, because it was written at different times. Books I, II, XIII and XIV would belong to the Platonic period (350–346); during his critical period he composed Books XI and XII; and in the third period he wrote all the others, particularly Chapter 8 of Book XII. Jäger also separates the ethical books – *Eudemian*, *Magna Moralia* and *Nicomachean* – placing them in the three distinct periods.

This thesis enjoyed a time of enormous success, and was referred to by many researchers studying specific Aristotelian problems: for physical problems by Howard Runnen (1951); by F. Nuyens for anthropology (1948); by Golkhe for logic (1936); by von Arnim for ethics (1928); by Oggioni (1939), Carlini (1938), A. Chroust (1964) and Cencillo (1957) for metaphysics; by G. Senn for biology (1933); etc.

The fifty-year rule of Jäger's thesis began to crumble after 1960, and today very few scholars support this radical theory. The result of Jäger's studies cannot be taken lightly, however. His studies led to a great reconsideration of Aristotelian studies, and they brought to light a theory which cannot be ignored, that of Aristotle's spiritual evolution. Only with this presupposition can we explain certain contradictions in the texts, above all the abandonment of the theory of ideas. However, we cannot support a division into three different and opposed periods, even if some authors, such as B. Dumoulin (*Recherches sur le premier Aristote* [*Eudeme*, *De la Philosophie*, *Protreptique*], Paris 1981) speak of Aristotle as having "resigned from the Academy".

The arguments against this thesis are many. We will mention only some of the more important ones: a) in theology, Aristotle in the *Protrepticus* proposes an astral conception of the divine (as did the Platonic *Laws*); in *De prece* the theological tone ascends by one level. God is thought, or someone beyond is thought. Finally, in the *Metaphysics* XII, 9 God is defined as "Thought of thought";[381]

b) in anthropology, Aristotle in the *Protrepticus*, fragment 10 b (Ross) states that man is "the most excellent and noble being coming from nature and according to nature". Now, P. Siwek observes that if Jäger's theory were correct, then the first part of the fragment would have been written in the Platonic period and the second in the positivistic period,[382] which is absurd; c) in metaphysics, we know that Theophrastus wrote a *Metaphysics*, in which he criticised his teacher, Aristotle. It is interesting to observe that Theophrastus refers to the later Aristotle, an Aristotle who admits an Immovable Mover as the principle of the universe in a spiritualistic sense. However, Theophrastus would not have criticised something his teacher had abandoned. In other words, Aristotle to the end had a religious and spiritualistic vision of the world;[383] d) in scientific research, it is a very popular opinion (Ross, Marcuse, Dal Sasso, etc.) that Aristotle wrote treatises long before he founded the Peripatetic School in Athens in 335, as we can see from his biological, botanical and zoological studies of animals and plants known only in Asia Minor.[384] This leads to the belief that his interest in the positive sciences did not begin only after 335, but during his residence in Assos, in 347–345.

To conclude, we may state that Aristotle was not a systematic thinker. Therefore, the genetic and evolutionary thesis is valid only in a generic sense. We do not have a way to measure in what time and in what areas he detached himself from his initial positions. There is one certain fact: that of Aristotle's detachment from Plato on the doctrine of the ideas. However, we do not need Jäger's studies to reach this conclusion. Regarding the *Metaphysics* (which is one of the most insistent points of the German philologist), G. Reale demonstrated that it is a unified work "already formed and consolidated in its structural lines from the beginning to the end of its fourteen books".[385] This means that he did not write to elaborate the system, working from theoretical writings and descending to the praxis. We know that the *Ethics* and the *Politics* were written because of circumstances, not as part of a systematic project.

2. *Aristotle and His Detachment from Plato*

There is a second characteristic note of Aristotelian philosophy, his detachment from Plato. We term this a detachment, and not a break, in order to express both a faithfulness and a surpassing which make Aristotle the greatest Platonic thinker, as Diogenes Laërtius had already noted. Still, the problem is not an easy one because we must determine: a) from which Plato Aristotle wished to detach himself, and b) when and how he performed this operation.

Opinions are divided on the response to the first query. We may work from Aristotle's works, especially *Metaphysics* I, 9, where the author lists 35 reasons to reject the Platonic theory of ideas.[386] The reasons can be summarised in the following objections: a) the separated ideas lack efficiency, because they are inert paradigms; b) things do not imitate and do not participate in the ideas (argument of the "third man"), because reality is sensible, and not ideal; c) the doctrine of separate ideas implies a series of insuperable difficulties. The most difficult problem is called "éxthesis" by Aristotle (992 b 12): the hypostatisation of concepts gleaned from experience and their reduction to concepts-genuses which would explain the unity of those same things.

Likewise in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle rejects as "mátaion" (I, 6, 1096 b 29) the statement that beyond the (Platonic) idea of good there can be no other good. However, these and other positions do not clarify to which Plato Aristotle was referring. We should observe that in *Metaphysics* 9, Aristotle leaps from Phaedo (quoted expressly in 991 b 2) to the anti-Pythagorean Plato (992 a 22). This means that Aristotle was referring not only to his teacher, but to his entire school, to the "Platonists", especially those contemporaries like Speusippus and Xenocrates who taught a fashionable type of Platonism. It is true that Aristotle criticised his still-living teacher in *De ideis* and *De Bono*, but in Metaphysics I, 9 he was probably referring to later Platonism as it was taught in his own times.[387]

Enrico Berti probably did the best job of clarifying this point in his work *La filosofia del giovane Aristotele* (Padua 1962). Aristotle had to take into account the concept of science as it was taught by the later Plato (cfr. the question of the "àgrapha dògmata", number 110, as proposed by Wilpert, *op. cit.*, note 19; C. De Vogel, "Problems Concerning Later Platonism", in *Mnemosyne*, IV, 1949, pp. 197–216 and 299–318; W. P. Ross' *Plato's Theory of Ideas*, *op. cit.*, pp. 142–153; A. Mansion, etc.) and probably likewise by Speusippus. According to this line of thought, the desire was to unify the study of moral values and ontological beings into one science. Virtue and unity, good and being, axiology and metaphysics would become parts of a single wisdom. This metaphysics would use an intuitive mathematical method, a "diairesis" similar to the deductions performed in mathematics. This "mathesis universalis" (imitated by the neo-Platonists, Spinoza and Hegel) could deduce from the "Bonum-Ens" all the ontological-axiological properties of reality. Aristotle in this context rejects the ethical aspect in the various Ethics, upholding the difference between value and being. This means that good is not the one and that virtue is not number. Good is not univocal (just as good in gymnastics and medicine is not the same as good in strategy). In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle energetically affirms the difference between being and number, between ontological principles and mathematical beings.[388]

Therefore, Aristotle corrects a Plato, who, if he were the object of criticism in his exoteric works, opened himself up even more to criticism in his later mathematical-Pythagorean positions.[389] So Aristotle detached himself from Plato and from the Platonists in order to be more Platonic, or–as G. Reale states the critique of the ideas is not an abandonment of "Plato's second navigation",[390] but is instead a more ardent attempt to do the same.

Still, there is a second point of detachment between Aristotle and his teacher: the time and the mode. There are two differing opinions concerning the time of the detachment: one of P. Moraux, which assigns rather late date to the dialogue *De ideis* (345) and places the dissent after Plato's death in Assos (*op. cit.*, p. 326). However, the second opinion proposed by Wilpert seems more tenable, which places the dissent at about 351–350 (*Zwei aristotelische frühschriften. . ., op. cit.*).

Regarding the mode, philologists propose three responses. The first establishes a radical opposition between the teacher and his student, culminating in incomprehension and open hostility. Recent authors supporting this position have included Natorp, Robin and C. De Vogel. Harold Cherniss (*Aristotle's Criticism of Plato and the Academy*, New York 1962) goes even further and accuses Aristotle of presenting more a caricature than a critique. "Whatever the philosophical value of this criticism may be, it is shown to misrepresent the Platonic conception of the idea by the fact that once the analysis has been completed, Aristotle himself confesses that he does not understand the place and the purpose of the ideas. . ." (p. 82). In the relation between matter and form. Aristotle sees the only solution of the problem of the world. However, his critique of Plato's thought is "mistaken. . . erroneous. . . contradictory" (*Ibid.*, pp. 476–477). Cherniss' thesis was rejected by H. Ross and merits attention only because of its extensive philological system. According to C. Del Grande, the detachment (for him, a break) is visible in the Eudemian Ethics, where the ancient Delphic wisdom is replaced with "eudaimonia", a pure and disinterested happiness which brings the greatest pleasure (*op. cit.*, p. 363).

The second and less radical interpretation proposes a gradual but continuous abandonment of Platonic doctrines, culminating in a total repudiation at the end of Aristotle's life. The harshness of Aristotle's language (when he accuses Plato of having made his theory of the ideas "vain chatter and poetic metaphor" (*Metaphysics* I, 9) would pertain more to Speusippus than to Plato.[391] This follows the theory of homogeneous and continuous evolution proposed by Jäger.

A third position, which we share, affirms the continuity between Platonic and Aristotelian doctrine in general. There are many scholars who support this thesis: Pepin (*op. cit.*, p. 212). Feibleman (*op. cit.*, p. 85). P. Wilpert, A. E. Taylor (*Aristotle and His Predecessors*, Illinois 1939), Klibansky (*The Continuity of Platonic Tradition During the Middle Ages*, London 1939), P. Shorey, A. Mansion, etc. Enrico Berti observed that we must also consider the Latin tradition from Cicero to Saint Ambrose, which constantly confirms such a continuity.[392] Aristotle's critique of the doctrine of ideas should thus be considered a just correction of the Academy, which inserted Plato's thought into the outline of the new theory of the idea-number. E. Bignone states that the detachment from Plato was "slow, difficult, but not complete" (I, p. 38). A specific study of the doctrines of the later Plato, such as matter, space, the elements, movement, time, theology and nature, was conducted by S. Claghorn, who concludes that these doctrines, when compared with their Aristotelian counterparts, reveal more similarities than differences. Aristotle suppressed the "chorismós" of the ideas, because this was a requirement stated even in the *Timaeus*.[393]

Aristotle wrote: "But perhaps it is better, nay a duty, for the salvation of truth to leave aside private affairs, above all for philosophers. Both friendship and truth are dear, but it is a sacred thing to honour truth more" (*Nicomachean Ethics* I, 4 1019 b 16 – hence the old adage, "Amicus Plato sed magis amica veritas"). Still, Aristotle so respected his mentor that he dedicated this inscription to Plato: "A grateful Aristotle raises this altar to Plato, a man whom the wicked are not permitted to praise."

3. *Aristotle and His Philosophical Method*

If Aristotle agrees with Plato in admitting supernatural realities (as we will explain later), he detaches himself in the explanation of inferior corporeal beings through the adoption of the "énylon eîdos", the "idea immersed in matter". From this new perspective (which remains Platonic in its preservation of the "eîdos" and insofar as the later Plato attempted to place the ideas into matter – cfr. the *Timaeus*) derives the orientation – and the *method of* *peripatetic philosophy*. Certainly a euristic, *scientific method* exists, which Aristotle uses in his works on biology, the natural sciences and meteorology. This method includes an acceptance of experience, the observation of events, experimentation and scientific induction. Not everything he states is perfect. In fact, sometimes he indulges himself in common opinions of that time; for example, women would have fewer teeth than men, the brain is intersected with veins full of air and hence is cold, the Ligurians have seven and not eight ribs as other mortals do. However, generally he was minute and attentive. For example, we see this in his study of the development of the chicken from the egg, his descriptions of the organs, tissues and functions of animals, etc. He listed 581 animals, classifying them according to criteria which remained valid for thousands of years. If Aristotle exercised an extraordinary influence on Western science, then this is due to his patient researches and acute observations; for example, when he defined man's hand as "the instrument of instruments". However, it was a sad reflection on his memory that the work he had begun was not continued after his death.[394] His views are indicated in the very word "historía" (*De historia animalium*), which means "observation", in the case of *Zoology*, and the "méthodos perì physeos" (*De partibus animalium*, 644 a 12), which uses dichotomy to classify the animals. He never used verification or infalsificability, which are the methods of modern science.

Regarding his philosophical method, we should immediately observe that Aristotle, having included mathematics and physics in the group of philosophical sciences, still furnishes different methods for these two disciplines. These disciplines remain autonomous from "wisdom", which are prime philosophy or metaphysics. In other words, Aristotle outlines the methods of mathematics without writing a specific treatise on the subject. On the contrary, he gives no method at all for Philosophy as such, although he dedicated the majority of his works to this subject.[395] Nonetheless, it is possible and acceptable to extract from his philosophical doctrines a method, which has two moments, one intuitive and the other demonstrative, corresponding in some ways to Plato's ascending and descending dialectics.

The *intuitive moment* rests on an empirical base, which is called sensation ("aísthesis") and opinion ('dóxa"), but develops into a true intellectual intuition ("noésis"), both in the affirmation of a thing's existence and in the exploration of a thing's essence. In other words, Aristotle utilises a phenomenological phase of concrete reality, which includes inferior knowledge, comparisons, exemplifications and various opinions, which all lead to the illuminating moment of intuition. For example, from an analysis of language and the laws of lexicon and grammar (subject, predicate, and the grammatical tenses of present, past and future) one can arrive at the determination of an ontological concept of substance-subject or of movement as the present act of a past-future. Hence architecture, medicine and sculpture suggest the doctrine of the four causes, just as the life of organisms sheds light on the concept of "télos", or form and end, which coincide in the structure of reality. In the ethical field, Aristotle states that human nature possesses spontaneous functions tending to good. In fact, nature "is structurally perfect and true" (*Nicomachean Ethics* III, 5 1114 a). Therefore, being and its fundamental properties cannot be taught or researched ("ouk ésti zétesis oudé didaxis–*Ibid*., 1041 b 9), but can only in a certain sense be intuited, similar to being "touched". This derives from the fact that, on one hand, Aristotle believed both in popular convictions and traditions and in the opinions of philosophers, to whom he particularly refers in ethical and metaphysical matters. On the other hand, he remains an optimist on human possibilities: "Every individual possesses something intimate ("oekeîon") tending toward truth (*Eudemian Ethics*, 1216 b 27).[396]

Working from this original and immediate form of knowledge, Aristotle takes recourse to the *deductive and demonstrative, or syllogistic, method, which has a scientific value*. In fact, the passage from ignorance to science passes through two forces: the stupor of evidence (or "noesis") and the paradox of the unknown. Between the two terms there is tension which Aristotle calls "notum quoad nos" and "notum quoad se". The "notum quoad se" is a glimmer we see with the eyes of a bat, while the "notum quoad nos" is an immediate knowledge which problematically suspends us in the air. To intuit without demonstrating is not science, but spectacle and admiration, while demonstrating without intuition, create problems and paradoxes, not scientific certainty.

The demonstrative method (in Greek, "apodictic") is different from Socrates, method of dialogue and Plato's dialectic method for two contrary reasons. It is not a dialogue because it is based on original personal intuition and certainty; it is not dialectic because it confronts the empirical world. From this statement, two living interpreters of Aristotle have supplied two varying versions of the Aristotelian method: it is not demonstrative, but probabilistic (Enrico Berti); it is demonstrative, but problematic, and never finds its conclusion (Pierre Aubenque).

Enrico Berti believes that Aristotle possessed a demonstrative method in the sciences, but that in philosophy his method was "dialectic" (in an Aristotelian sense), lacking direct demonstration and having only an indirect proof consisting in the rejection of an adversary's reasons. For example, this is visible in the principle of non-contradiction (which has an "élenchos", but not an "apodeixis") and in other central doctrines.

Pierre Aubenque[397] makes Aristotle a researcher of truth who never reaches that truth. Therefore, Aristotle deals in problematics and imprisons himself from the beginning in doubt or paradox.

We respond to Enrico Berti[398] by stating that in his metaphysics, Aristotle directly demonstrates the existence or essence of a thing when this rests at the base of philosophy itself. It is true that metaphysics, since it is often entrusted to the "noûs", or intuition, does not always require demonstration. Still, this does not mean that the truth which follows is probabilistic, unfounded and a-critical. It is "wisdom" and "episteme" (*Nicomachean Ethics* XI, 1059 a 31–32). It is "wisdom" when it opens itself immediately, through "noesis", to truth. It is science ("episteme") when it demonstrates (for instance, the existence of God).[399] Hence metaphysics by nature possesses a "hexis apodeiktiké", or demonstrative capacity. If God were not to exist, the physics would be the prime philosophical discipline, because by itself it would explain worldly being (*Metaphysics* 1026 a 27–32). In response to Aubenque, it should be noted that paradox has an initial function in Aristotle: a) to introduce the demonstration (hence there exists a "diaporêsai kalôs", a feeling at home in doubt) in the form of a question on an open problem; b) to overcome ignorance; and c) to hear the opinions of others. However, paradox is not the central element of science. Science for Aristotle is not a drawback or a setback of the mind.[400] Paradox is only an initial and subjective, or psychological and contingent state often preceded by stupor, and hence by certainty.

To conclude, Aristotle's philosophy, which is based on the intuitive-demonstrative method, is neither a beautiful but indemonstrable romance (Berti), nor a rigmarole of doubts with no end (Aubenque). We must correctly understand the value of stupor (Berti) and paradox (Aubenque), which are the two poles or motors of Aristotle's philosophy in general.

4. *Meaning of Aristotle's Philosophy*

"Philosophy is the science of truth" (*Metaphysics*, 993 b 17), in two senses: a) as an autonomous and coherent system, and b) as a speculative knowledge.

As a coherent and autonomous system, philosophy is not "the profession of life" or an almost prophetic vocation, as it was for Empedocles, Heraclitus and Plato, but a defined complex of propositions regarding a determined object: being and truth. As a speculative knowledge ("theoria"), philosophy, like any other science, is an exterior organisation of thought which does not resolve the personal problems of the philosopher, but the problems of the object being considered. Yes, there is a true wisdom which regards human questions in a specific sense (ethics), but this is also a science in the Aristotelian sense. However, this objective spirit of Aristotelian philosophy does not imply anonymity and personal detachment, but, as W. Jäger observes, "a form of super-personal spirituality . . . a quietness with respect to the world and life".[401] In this sense, we may state that Aristotle is the founder of a non-prophetic, non-vocation, or "professional" philosophy (Düring).

CHAPTER TEN

ARISTOTLE'S METAPHYSICS

1. *Epistemology of the Sciences and Metaphysics*

In order to describe Aristotelian philosophy, it is necessary to refer not to an external criterion (such as order of works in the *Corpus aristotelicum*), but to seek a criterion internal to the philosopher's speculation. He certainly seemed to reject the "universal mathematics" proposed by the later Plato, as we have said. A single discipline, even if it were articulated in a variety of branches, did not satisfy the character and spirit of the disciple.

In the place of universal induction, Aristotle substituted a criterion which is in a certain sense empirical, and in another sense anthropological, as we see in the *Metaphysics* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*.[402] The sciences regard either knowledge ("theoreîn"), action ("práttein") or production ("poieîn"). Aristotle did not include among the three forms the "historía", or the phenomenological disciplines whose goal is not knowledge, but description or classification (zoology, meteorology and – in a certain sense – politics), which are viewed as empirical systems in relation and function to true science.[403]

The resulting outline appears as follows:

Sciences
- of knowledge
  - metaphysics
  - physics
  - mathematics
- of action: logic, ethics, dialectics, politics
- of production: art, poetry, rhetoric, technology, medicine, etc.

The clarity of the outline conceals some difficulties,[404] which may be formulated in the following questions: a) does philosophy include all the disciplines of the three orders (theoretical, practical and productive), or only metaphysics and mathematics?; b) if it only includes the latter group, then in what sense may physics and mathematics be called philosophical?[405] Our answer is: a) philosophy only includes the theoretical disciplines, since it is not (as some historians stated, among them Zeller, Bréhier and Hegel) an encyclopaedia;[406] b) second, physics and mathematics can also be traced back to "prime philosophy", or metaphysics. This is not true for logic, ethics, rhetoric and dialectics, much less for technology.[407]

In particular, metaphysics studies the immobile and separate being (*Metaphysics*, 1026 a 10–16). Physics and mathematics are "parts" ("mére") of metaphysics, insofar as they study an aspect of being: the non-separate mutable being is the object of physics, while the extended (immobile but not separated) being is the object of mathematics.[408] Therefore, these three disciplines are not placed in a hierarchy according to a grade of abstraction (as A. Mansion and Maritain wrote, making the first grade of abstraction belong to physics, the second to mathematics and the third to metaphysics), but according to a Platonic requirement. For this reason, Aristotle's physics are superior to his mathematics, because the object of physics is closer to supernatural beings.

Thereupon, physics must not be understood here in the modern sense. In reality, it is a knowledge which considers everything having "kínesis", including the stars (astronomy), living beings (anthropology, psychology, etc.) and the inanimate world (kinetics, cosmology).

2. *Metaphysics and Being*

Aristotle calls the highest philosophical discipline "prime philosophy", in order to distinguish it from physics, a "theological science" in that it examines both material (celestial bodies) and spiritual (God and the celestial movers) divine realities (Metaphysics, 1026 a 10),[409] and a science which occupies itself with "being insofar as being" ("tò òn e ón"). The most complex points in these three conceptual determinations regard "being insofar as being". Various scholars have given their opinions on this matter, among them Philip Merlan, A. Mansion, S. Moser, H. Wagner, L. Elders, U. Dhont, E. Severino, etc. There are three basic interpretations: a) the "being" ("tò ón") is a general concept applied to all realities having existence. Therefore, the incisive "insofar as being" means the universal "to kathòlou" or "physis" (*Metaphysics*, 1005 b 6). This exegesis refers to *Metaphysics*, 1026 a 27–32, where we read:

> To be and the being are words with multiple meanings, however with the word "being" one always speaks in reference to one and to one nature, nor is this a homonymic. In the same sense, everything healthy has something to do with health, insofar as it preserves or produces it, or it is a sense or receiver of health.

However, this interpretation of metaphysics as a study of the "ens generalissimum" has not gained widespread acceptance, and its proposer, A. Mansion, never responded to the problem of this "physis", which seems to be merely a concept. However, Aristotle, in other passages, attributes something more than the mere function of predicability to being;[410] b) the "being insofar as being" means the possession of existence of single individuals in the world (L. Elders),[411] having a mutual existential relation. The science of separate substances (or theology) would be something else. This thesis comes close to the preceding one, but it divides "prime philosophy" into general metaphysics and theology, which does not seem plausible; c) Merlan states that "being insofar as being" is applied only to the immobile and separate substance, because only God and the supreme movers possess existence in the full sense. The "próte ousía" of the Aristotelian texts means "akínetos ousía", which is the Platonic "òntos ón".[412] Hence metaphysics are identified with theology, or with (to use a valid term from Leibniz) theodicy. Therefore, the term "theology" would be justified for use when referring to prime philosophy.

In truth, the three versions reflect authentic Aristotelian texts, and hence they are all true in a certain sense. As Düring noted, a different affirmation is found in a notable passage from the philosopher's pen:

> If there existed only the things of nature, then the philosophy of nature ["physiké"] would be prime philosophy. Instead, if there is something which exists without participating in the processes of nature, then the science which considers this is the *first* and is *prime philosophy.* Insofar as it is prime philosophy, it is also a *universal philosophy*, and its task is to study being as being, both in its being and in the determinations which belong to it as a being (1026 a 30).

Should we affirm that Aristotle intended to contradict himself? In all likelihood, this is not to be understood as During intended.[413] Aristotle is Platonic; the sensible world has an antenna extended toward the infinite. Hence the threefold value of the expression "being insofar as being"; it indicates the concrete reality which exists individually in the existent substance, but which can be traced back to its supreme Cause. However, here we come across a second problem: what, then, is existence, which is common to material substances and to divinity? Note well: the discussion does not regard the concept or predicability of being in the universal sense, but in the "eînai" of existence as a value. The problem does not seem to be alien to Aristotelian thought, since Plato had already stated in the *Republic* that Good is superior to being, almost as if to say that a thing exists because it is good, but it is not good because it exists. (*Republic*, 509 b).

Many authors, such as Düring, do not enter into this topic. However, those more inured to classical metaphysics consider the question. For example, C. Giacon states that the "eînai" is to be understood[414] as a fact, as a "being in" the world as an actuality, and not as a value. This opinion is shared by E. Gilson[415] and J. Owens,[416] according to whom Aristotle could only have affirmed that existence is a communicated perfection which is also a participant. M. Heidegger examined this subject more in depth, and he stated that Aristotle obliterated Parmenides' being, substituting existence-value, with the pure self-presentation of the present object ("parousia") as actuality ("wirklichkeit"), the presence of that which is present, a fact already realised.[417]

In my opinion, we should make two observations: a) Aristotle did not admit Platonic participation, and hence he did not see that being could be a communicated perfection; b) nevertheless, he saw in being a good (a "to béltîon" to which beings aspire – *De Coelo*, 336 b 25 ff., *Metaphysics*, 993 b 31–32). That is, he saw the being is a value as it appears in becoming. We can also glean this from a passage of the *Posterior Analytics*, 93 b 8 and 95 a 5, where (to use the words of D. Ross) "There is a mystery which has never been explained. Aristotle confesses his sense of mystery when he says, 'It is necessary to investigate its content as something which has happened and could take place and occur in things."[418] Therefore, it seems that Aristotle distinguished the state of being from the value of being. The state of being is duration in existence (which Aristotle referred to with the words "hypárchein", "tòde tí" and "tò hòti"). Instead, the value of being is the perfection of the fact and state of being ("tò eînai").

Being as pure factuality is known both declaratively ("doxa") and in an uncoerced, intuitive way ("nóesis"). In the *Protrepticus*, Aristotle stated that there are "horáseis oûsai noetôn" (fragment B 24, Düring), visions of the intelligible. In *Metaphysics*, 1165 b 24 it is stated that we possess intellectual contact ("thigeîn") with the existent, through which we affirm ("phánai") with a mental act which comes before the enunciation of a judgement ("katáphasis"). In other passages, the philosopher states that metaphysics considers the existence and essence of things; one receives either a demonstration ("apodeixis") of these things or another form of illumination ("delôsis", Metaphysics VI, 1025 b 14–18), an intuition called "noûs".[419] These are the glimmers of light from which metaphysics work. Hence metaphysics is an exploration of being insofar as being, which – as G. Reale states – contains four constants or dimensions: the study of being (ontology), the study of the substance ("ousiology"), the study of causes ("aitology"), and the study of divinity ("theology").[420]

3. *Metaphysics as Ontology and the Study of Substance*

As we have seen, Aristotle's metaphysics does not exclude the study of being in a universal sense, as a property or concept predicable of various subjects. The reason for this research in Aristotle is due to the fact that being and existence, since they are not derived through participation or creation, are not studied "on the mountain", but "in the valley", in their applications or verifications of predicability. This study is performed according to the principle of analogy, which we proposed in a previous passage, when Aristotle compares being to the concept of health, almost as if to say that one way to know being is to observe its logical behaviour or modes of attribution, "hoís hóristai tò óv" (*Metaphysics* VII, 1029 a 21).

Aristotle usually mentions[421] four modes of attributing being: a) being "per se" and "per accidens" (for example, for Socrates sitting is an accident); b) being according to the various figures of predication or attribution; c) being as true and false; and d) being as act and potency.

In fact, if the being (or being) is a concept ("mìa arché", "mìa tis physis", "génos") which results from the initial glimmering of intuition, then it can be further considered a property or conceptualisation realised in various frameworks or modes. However, the first and third "must be left aside" (1028 a 4) because they pertain to logic. The framework of being according to the various figures of predication remains, which we call ontology or a study of the substance (insofar as the first figure of the predication of being is substance) and the study of the causes, which we shall discuss later. Indeed, Aristotle states that beings ("ónta") are what they are either because they are existent in themselves ("ousíai"), or as modifications ("páthe"), way ("odós"), possession ("héxis"), disposition ("diáthesis"), or movement ("kínesis") of being (*Metaphysics*, 1003 b 5–7). There are ten various modes of attribution, or "kategoríai", which Aristotle lists twice in their entirety in the Categories. The categories are: substance, quality, quantity, relation, location, when, action-passivity, "habitus" (having), "situs" (position). However, in other places the philosopher (who refers to this outline 32 times) mentions only four or five of the categories.[422]

Since the doctrine of the ten categories (which has lasted for two thousand years) does not seem to have had any precedents, the question first of all arises whether he was *inspired* by Plato (for example, by the latter's five "mégista géne" of the *Sophistes*, as Rose, Gercke, Zürcher, Jäger and Geiser believe; or by the scheme in the *Timaeus* of being, enduring, place, world and time). In general, scholars support the originality of Aristotle's thought. Insofar as Plato classified some of his metaphysical outlines in a very different context. Another question regards the categories' *content*, or global meaning. In 1812, Trendelenburg used an ingenious analogy to establish a rapport between grammar, logic and metaphysics; hence the first category would have a grammatical (name), logical (subject) and ontological (substance) meaning. The second category would have a grammatical function (adjective), a logical one (predicate) and an ontological one (quality). The "actio-passio" would include the verb and the copula, action and endurance, etc. However, De Rijk demonstrated later that this attempt must be considered a failure, and later Y. Pellettier proved the same.

The problem of the *number ten* is even more hotly debated. Some authors have sought to deductively establish the essential and definitive nature of the complete series (Pacius, Giacon). Still, the perplexing question remains of why, when the "table" of ten appears only two times in minor works, we must consider this a definitive teaching. Moreover, Geiser observes that while the Platonic "géne" are the result of a mathematical operation, the "table" of Aristotle is arrived at in an experimental way. Hence it is correct in its totality, but imperfect and debatable in some respects. Even more complex is the *strictly ontological problem*: are the categories concepts, or are they real modes of being? The question arises from the fact that Aristotle generally arrives at them through predication: "to òn pollachôs legómenon" in connection with the copula (cfr. Öhler, *op. cit.*, p. 173). Hence the question arises: which is the part of thought in the subdivision (and predication) and the "eînai"?

For Apelt, Zeller, Maier, Le Blond, Moreau, etc., the logical aspects prevail over the metaphysical one, insofar as one considers the predicable "term"[423] and not its content, which is the "eînai". However, this does not explain the use of the neutral words "to poîon", "tò posón", etc., which indicate the reality of the accidents and not primarily their predicability. This demonstrates the functional character of logic with respect to metaphysics. There are no categories to predicate being, but being is predicated in order to verify it in its real consistency. This is confirmed by the fact that Aristotle also takes recourse to movement (and not only predication) to clarify being through the act-potency couplet.

It follows that in Aristotle, ousiology prevails over ontology, just as substance takes precedence over the accidents.[424] Therefore, his is not an ontology of the "ens generalissimum", but of existence ("eînai").

Now we can understand the meaning of "substance" ("oûsia"). As J. Owens revealed,[425] it is the abstract form of "oûsa", which, being a participle, indicates "the reality which is" (as Düring translates), the "existence" in all its excellence. Likewise, the other categories have within themselves the "eînai" and the "tò éstin", but substance, has it "primarily and in an absolute way" ("prótos kaì haplôs"). In fact, substance is "self-sufficient" ("choristón") in existence; it is the "concrete existent" ("tò kath' hékaston"). The other nine categories are "additions" ("symbebekóta") in a "surrogate" way ("hyposménos"). They are "accidents".

Therefore, substance and accidents possess being in a proportional way, or in an "analogical"way,[426] to use a more recent term, insofar as the "eînai", which is found only in the substance, applies itself to the other categories in reference to the substance. "To remove from and add to" existence means to create a hierarchical series of attributes, which are the categories (cfr. D. Ross. *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, Oxford 1924, vol. I, p. 172; A. Carlini, *La metafisica di Aristotele*, Bari 1927, p. 217, note 2).

The structures regarding the conceptual exploration of the existent realities derive from existence. These structures follow the line of the essence and hence represent a further deepening in the modes of being. Therefore, using an outline, one can state that the "ousía" is the "existence that is", and the successive structures are the "existent essence", either in a generic or specific way:

Being ("eînai")
- —existence that is = "oûsia"
- existent essence —("logikôs" – 1041 a 30)
  - —*in a generic sense*, "that which is" ("quod quid est", "tò tì estin"). *The essence* ("quod quid erat esse rei", "tò ti ên eînai")
  - —in a specific sense
    - —*subject* ("hypokeimenon") or *matter* ("hyle")
    - —*act* ("enteléchia") and *actuality* ("enérgeia"); *form* ("morphé"), *reason* ("logos"), *species* ("eîdos"):

This scheme indicates the conceptual development of existence. In fact, existence is not only being in time ("to hypárchein"), but an "investigated" being (the question: what is it?), an existence that continues to "be what it was" ("to ti ên eînai"), a subject of existence ("hypochéimenon"), the matter to which existence belongs, the act or actuality of existence, the form of grade of existence, the reason or foundation of existence, and the reason for which a reality exists ("eidos"). Since Aristotle did not have the concept of creation, the problem of existence ("tò aúton toû eînai", *Metaphysics*, 1043 b 13) shifts from the efficient cause (the Creator who makes creatures participate in his perfection) to the formal and final cause, the "eîdos" or "entelécheia" (which means "that which has a 'télos' in it"). In other words, for the matter to exist, the form will suffice; for a composed being to exist, it suffices that there be an immanent end ("telos") which determines and specifies it ("entelécheia").

4. *Metaphysics as a Study of Causes*

Being can be examined and deepened through its causes ("àitia"), and hence according to their becoming. In fact, Aristotle was faced with the Eleatic dilemma – being is, the non being is not – and resolved the problem with the act-potency couplet, which is the dynamic aspects of being. There is a passive "potency", or capacity to become, which rests between being and non-being; hence non-being also exists in a certain way. Just as analogy breaks Eleatic unity, so potency breaks its unbecoming or immutability.

Act and potency are at the base of the four forms of being: act, being-act, being-potency and potency. The first form belongs only to God, the second to finite existents, the third is the existent's passive capacity to change, and the fourth is the prime matter, which does not exist in itself. This partitioning brings to light the primacy of act over being in the ontological framework, even if gnoseologically it is always the contingent being which opens itself to the act of human intelligence. Therefore, God is more act ("energeia") than being (*Metaphysics*, 1071 b 20).

However, movement (as likewise the categories) reveals the being-act, and movement is defined as "actus existentis in potentia in quantum est in potentia".

The being changes when its act is imperfect;[427] a being which does not change is perfect act. Therefore, the act precedes the potency in time, ontological dignity and value. It is likened by Aristotle to a completed edifice in relation to the one yet to be started, with wakefulness compared to sleep, with an open eye compared to a closed one (*Metaphysics*, 1048 b 12).

A metaphysical analysis of the act, which reveals itself in movement, postulates the composition, which is the totality of act and potency ("synolon"). Without the potency, or material cause, the composition ("kinetón") could not change. Therefore, the mutable being ("kinetón") requires two intrinsic principles, matter and form. These, in turn, require two thrusts, one from the rear and one which acts as a goal ("hôu héneka"), which is the good ("tò êu") of the mutable being and its attainable perfection ("telos"). Hence the doctrine of the causal tetralogy: material, formal, efficient (from behind) and final cause (as the tension toward the terminus and goal). The final cause is sometimes identified with the formal cause, insofar as the goal or perfection is already contained in the real possibility of the form ("entelécheia": from "en", "télos" and "échein" = to have an end in itself).

The doctrine of the four causes is proposed as something intuitive by Aristotle, insofar as "it is not necessary to seek the definition of every thing" (Metaphysics, 1048 b 11), but it suffices to refer to what is analogous through evidence (for example, in the case of the bronze sphere, the house to be built, of Callias or of Socrates). The efficient cause ("tò kinoûn") transmits its act to what is passive (hence the famous expression, "man generates man"), as the flame passes from one candle to another. However, in general (but not in concrete reality), the efficient cause which produces the form also determines the end.

5. *Metaphysics and Theology*

Theology is not a particular science for Aristotle, along with physics, mathematics, etc., but an aspect ("génos ti") of being, the highest aspect of being. Therefore, theology is special and universal at the same time. It is special in its object, universal for the character of the object itself, which is the supreme Principle of movement.[428] This Principle is called "to theîon", and is made up of that part of the universe dominated by immobile, eternal and divine substances (55, according to the version found in Book XII, 8 of the *Metaphysics*). The supreme element of these principles is the "to prôton", the Prime Immovable Mover, on which the heaven and earth "depend" (*Ibid.*). A "scientific" proof would be the one which Aristotle offers to prove its existence (*Metaphysics*, 1071 b 5–10). Hence we arrive at the problem of the relation between this "theological" science and religion. If God does not have moral tasks regarding the universe (J. Rist, *op. cit.*, pp. 158–160), much less regarding man, then why should men worship this God?

In order to respond to this question, we must first state that Aristotle opposed the polytheism and idolatry which ran rampant in his day. He observes, "It is ridiculous to attribute to gods contracts, payments and other similar things" (*Nicomachean Ethics* X, 8, 1179 a 6). If one properly wishes to say that God is blessed, then one must not say that he is blessed as man is, because man's happiness consists of the exercising of the cardinal virtues: fortitude, temperance, justice and prudence. God is blessed not because he sleeps, but because of an activity proper to him, which is contemplation (Ibid., 1178 b 29–"è toû theoû enérgia theoretiké"). In the famous eighth chapter from Book XII of the *Metaphysics*, he notes, "The other stories [on the divinities of the heavens] are accessorial and have reached us in the form of fables for popular beliefs, the observance of laws, and for the common good" (1074 5). He concludes that behind the myths one can find a nucleus of essential truths, which in such a case would be a divine revelation.

In these and other passages,[429] we see the "professional" character of Aristotelian philosophy, which implies a detachment from sentiment and mysticism together with demonstrative rigour. Theology is a metaphysical, and not a religious, problem.

Still, I would not be willing to interpret this attitude as a skeptical attitude, as Feibleman states.[430] Aristotle is Platonic in referring the solution to ontological problems to the supreme Cause, as we read in the following text: " . . . if an eternal, separate and immutable being does not exist then there could be no order in the universe" (999 b 5–6). On the other hand, we must also take into consideration other fragments of the notably religious lost works, which influenced the works we have today. For example, note fragment 20 (Düring) of the *Protrepticus*, which states, "Therefore, with subtlety, according to this discourse, Pythagoras stated that every man has been formed by God to know and to contemplate."[431]

His tendency to monotheism derives from this "professorial" character, which we see in the Homeric verse concluding Book XII of the Metaphysics: "There is but one Lord". Hence we arrive at the surprising affirmation in *De motu animalium* (698 a 4) where it is declared that the existence of the Immovable Mover is a necessary condition "for the world to continue to subsist and not to transform itself into nothingness at a certain moment".[432]This statement is repeated by Theophrastus, when he states that "all things remain in being through God" (Metaphysics, 4 b 13–16).

An exhaustive examination of Aristotelian theology includes two parts: one concerning the demonstration of God's existence, and another regarding God's essence.

A) *Demonstration of God's existence*: In addition to the demonstration "ex gradibus" proposed in *De Philosophia*, Aristotle arrives at the proof "ex motu", both in *Physics* VIII and *Metaphysics* XII. In the first work, he states that "quidquid movetur ab alio movetur", in the cosmological sense. That is, the sub-lunar motor depends on the motor of the stars, which is circular and eternal. But a series of movers and moved objects cannot be infinite.

Therefore, it is necessary to stop ("anànke stênai") at a mover which moves without being moved. Thereupon, an Immovable Mover exists, who is still never called God. Hence it is only with difficulty that the proof contained in the *Physics* could be called "theological". A different approach is used in Book XII, Chapter 6 of the *Metaphysics*, which (as Merlan observes) reminds us of Plato's religious spirit.[433] The procedure is similar to that in the Physics, but is centred on the contingency of cosmic movement. If there exists in the world an eternal movement, it does not cease to be contingent, insofar as the infinite sum of partial movements increases their precarious condition. This can be likened to a chain: the more links there are, the more weight there is, and the more resistant a clip is required.[434] Therefore, an Immovable Mover exists, which is pure Act ("enérgeia") and whose existence is absolute. Certainly a notable similarity exists between the Aristotelian demonstration and the Thomistic "via ex contingentia". They differ in their supports: the former entrusts itself to the contingency of movement, while the latter is based on the contingency of being.

B) *God's essence*: Having admitted that God exists, we may ask ourselves about his essence. Note that this problem is not suggested in modern theology; it is Aristotle who, after having dedicated Chapter 6 of Book XII to existence, in the following chapter and in chapter 9 confronts the question of essence using a different thematics. The point of departure is the analogy between man's spiritual life and divine spiritual life. A hierarchy ("systoichía") or ascending grades of values can be seen here. The highest value is truth-good, which we find in the human world through direct experience. The greatest truth rests at the vertex of truth, just as the greatest good ("áriston") rests at the vertex of good. Therefore, God is truth and goodness.

However, because he is the Immovable Mover, the further question arises of how a supreme and most good being could move without being moved. Here Aristotle manifests the spirit of his philosophy. The intelligible object and the object to be loved move without being moved. Indeed, good itself is bound to intelligibility, and we desire a good because we know it. Thereupon it is not we who make an object good when we move toward it (1072 a 30); on the contrary, it is the object which is good in itself, and hence we desire it.

Therefore, God is the absolutely thinkable and lovable being. In this sense he moves the universe. He is loved love ("kinêi os erómenon" – cfr. the Platonic "eros", which has an almost contrary dimension). His life is thought ("zoè enérgeia nóesis"), and his object is his own act of thought ("nóesis nóeseos"). Therefore, even if God is free, he is necessary ("anánkei òn"); he is blessed, best, perfect, eternal, transcendent, but not provident.[435]

6. *Metaphysics and its Laws*

Metaphysics, as Aristotle illustrates in Book IV of the *Metaphysics*, does not only study being, but likewise its equivalent or approximate terms, such as one, identical, similar, diverse, contrary, anterior, posterior, and multiple.[436] However, in order to qualify itself as a science, it must possess, as all other sciences do, its own axioms or principles, such as those of equality (*Posterior Analytics* I, 10), of identity (*Ibid.* I, 11), of causality (*Posterior Analytics* II), of the third excluded (*Metaphysics*, 1005 a). Above all, it must possess the principle today commonly called that of "non-contradiction", which is proposed in Book III. In fact, if metaphysics were to depend solely on induction or empirical data (which are called "dialectical" in Aristotelian terminology), then it would not even be a knowledge, much less supreme knowledge.[437] These principles, like manifest concepts ("óroi"), are intuition of thought ("noûs archôn").

The principle of non-contradiction is called "the syllogistic principle", insofar as it rests at the base of syllogisms, and hence of the sciences. There are three formulations of this principle: a) *ontological* (*Metaphysics*, 1005 b 23–24, *Categories*, 17 a): "it is impossible that something is and is not simultaneously for the same reason"; b) *logical* (*Metaphysics*, 995 b 9–19): "to affirm and at the same time negate one and the same thing" is impossible; and c) *psychological* (*Metaphysics* 1005 b 22–25): "this principle is the most certain . . . because it is impossible that one think that the same thing is and is not".

The properties of the principle are as follows. First of all, this is the foundation of prime philosophy, but it is not the object of science. Therefore, it cannot be demonstrated but is based on an intuitive form called "faith" ("pístis") or "ultimate opinion" ("escháte dóxa"). Second, it cannot be hypothesised ("anypóthetos") and is not based on any other axiom, because it is "most known and most solid". Third, the philosopher, as likewise any other man, "must already know these axioms, and he cannot get to know them during the course of his study" (1005 b).

The indemonstrability of the principle does not exclude the possibility of the external defence of the principle. In fact, a) the process to the infinite is not possible in science (Posterior Analytics I, b 19–22), and hence it is necessary to admit "anapodictic" principles of science; b) whoever negates the principle of being should remain silent and reduce himself to a "wooden trunk"; c) whoever negates this principle destroys being ("aniaroûsin ousían kaì tò ti ên eînai"). However, it would be erroneous to attribute intrinsic value of a principle for this threefold refutation ("élenchos"); it is a remedy against an adversary, not as a complete proof.[438]

The meaning of the principle is this: while Socrates is seated, it is impossible that he not be sitting. As we can see, this implies the concept of time. "While" he sits, Socrates cannot not be seated. Still, critics ask themselves where the force of this principle derives from.[439]

Is this a law of thought in the logical sense? Or is it a law of being in an ontological sense? Or is this a psychological necessity for whoever pronounces it? We respond: it seems historically that Aristotle had formulated the principle in his polemics against the Megarians. Ontologically, the principle is a law of being; from here derives the impossibility to think and say anything different. The capacity to be thought and spoken is derived, as logical aspects. Also, the psychological aspect is secondary and surrogate; certainty and solidity are states of mind which derive from the original intuition of the principle, which is a law of being.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

PHYSICS

1. *Cosmological Physics*

As we have stated above, physics is a "second philosophy". Aristotle discusses it in *De Coelo*, in *Physicorum libri octo*, or the *Physics* (also called *Naturalis auscultationis libri VIII*, 24), in the *Meteorology*, and elsewhere in passing. Its *object* is all worldly reality below the moon, which is called "physis", as opposed to the immutable supernatural world, called "Heaven". Therefore, the "physis" is what possesses the principle of "kínesis" or mutation in individual worldly beings. Hence the classical concept of "nature" as the dynamic essence tending toward the expansion of being is introduced into philosophy, both in living beings (physics of living beings, discussed later) and in non-living, or inorganic beings.

The *method* of access to this object differs profoundly from that of modern physics, so much so that the Aristotelian discussion could not properly be called physics in the modern sense, but a philosophy of nature. This access is realised in the consideration of things as they present themselves to experience and according to common language, in order to then ascend to the causes ("áitia"). On the contrary, modern physics hardly considers immediate sensory data, but uses experimental verification and critique of its mathematical formulas. Aristotle's physics descended from that of Plato, while modern physics began with Galileo. The physics of the inorganic substances considers, above all, movement in its four divisions: substantial, qualitative, quantitative and local (or locomotion, which is subdivided into traction, thrust, transport and rotation). Local movement or locomotion is threefold: either downward (earth and water), or upward (air and fire), or circular (a celestial substance or "quintessence" called ether, which is the matter of the stars). It can be "natural" (if it follows the described order, as in the upward movement of air and fire or the downward movement of earth and water), or violent (if it opposes this law).

Five fundamental questions arise from this latter consideration: movement in the ordering of the universe, the velocity of bodies, time, the infinite, and place.

2. *Movement*

Aristotle rejects the myth of the *Timaeus*, where the movement of the Universe derived from a "pre-cosmic" principle. No, movement is eternal, even if it is fueled by the Immovable Mover. It is only circular in the heavens. It takes on various forms under the moon: right to left, upward and downward, forward and backward. This indicates the imperfection of the sub-lunar bodies, which tend to rise if they are light and fall if they are heavy. In this fashion, the universe remains in equilibrium, and does not sink (cfr. *De Coelo* IV). Its centre is the earth; even if the earth and the moon were to change places, then the centre would still remain the same (*De Coelo*, 296 b 6). Therefore, no Atlantis is necessary to rule the cosmos (*Ibid.*, 28 b 1). Within the great machine of the world, the earthy bodies tend in their *natural movement* toward the centre of the universe, which accepts them like a funnelled basket. The light, or fiery, bodies *in their natural movement* tend toward the periphery of the universe. The liquid and aerial bodies rest between the two extremes. Proof: a floating bladder filled with air weighs more than a bladder with no air. For a critique of these rather ingenuous theories, cfr. Düring, who makes a scornful exposition of them (*op. cit.*, pp. 376–414). D. Ross finds two defects in the experiment of the bladder: a) a true experiment leads to the conclusion that the bladder weighs the same in both cases; b) one must study the gravitation of bodies, not by working from the theory of the four elements of Empedocles, but from the fact of weight and gravity,[440] as Newton did.

3. *Velocity*

The velocity of bodies is explained by Aristotle with four factors: impulse (or thrust), weight, mass and the means within which the body moves. If we hypothesise that instead of a means (for example, air for a bird) there would be a vacuum, then bodies would have an infinite velocity, and hence they would move without time. This is false, given what we know today. Aristotle does not admit the possibility of movement in a vacuum, because the universe is (contrary to the theory of Democritus, which he rejected), one and single, closed and finite. Therefore, every movement takes place in a means, such as water, air or earth. It is the means which explains the acceleration or slowing of the movement.

Democritus' vacuum cannot be admitted, either between bodies in the form of sacs, or as a diffused state between bodies, or even beyond the universe. The sacs or spaces between bodies are explained with contraction and elasticity. Hence, when I squeeze a body, I do not fill vacuums (in Aristotle's opinion), but I realise the potentiality of the matter. Beyond the universe there is nothing, a lack of any entity. To say that nothingness exists is nonsense. The universe does not exist in any time or any place.

4. *Time*

The definition of time as "number of movement according to a before and an after" is celebrated in the history of philosophy. This phrase was repeated and re-interpreted by Plotinus, we find it in Saint Augustine's thought, and in recent times it influenced the researches of Hegel, Bergson and Heidegger. We must exclude the Kantian vision, which makes time an a priori category. In fact, the "before and after" express the order and succession of bodies' real movement, although this is measured by the soul (or mind) through the regularity of hours, days, weeks, months, years and centuries. Time is a reality exterior to man, which is the duration of the material world. Nevertheless, the parts of movement are infinitely divisible by thought into "instants", which Aristotle defines mathematically by referring to the geometric point. The instant is the bond which connects the before and the after through an operation of the soul. Therefore, a subjective aspect of time exists, which is the numbering of the before and the after through instants.[441]

5. *The Physical Infinite*

The corporeal infinite does not exist. Indeed: a) every body is in a place, but the place is determined, and hence the body must be determined; b) every body is composed, but the composed is by definition finite; c) in movement, one part of the body occupies the space of one part of another body, which is determined. However, to admit an infinite body would mean to also admit the possibility of movement and the existence of parts. But the sum of finite parts never gives me the infinite.

Nevertheless, the infinite is possible as a mathematical quantity, both in division and in addition. However, this infinity is in reality potential, and division is not infinite, but exhaustive:

$$\frac{1}{2}+\frac{1}{4}+\frac{1}{8}+\frac{1}{16} \quad \text{and so forth into infinity, approaches } 1.$$

We always draw closer to the exhaustion of the finite, which is the number 1.[442]

6. *Place*

Aristotle did not use (and the Greek language did not include) the word "space", but "place" ("tópos"), which is defined as the real body, or as a geometric surface which envelops another body. The conditions for the definition of the place are: a) the enveloping or "locating" body must contain the enveloped or "located" body; b) the locating body is not part of the located body; c) the locating body is neither larger nor smaller than the located body at their point of contact; d) the place, properly speaking, is the immediate external surface of the locating body. This is also true for a boat which is stopped in a river, because what is taken into consideration is not the flowing water, but the geometric surface of the boat with respect to the outside.

For Aristotle, the world is one, eternal, perfect, ordered to an end and a good, both of the parts and of the whole. Therefore, it is governed by law and rationality, whose principles are "nature" and "art". The opposites of nature and art are chance ("autómaton") and fortune ("tyche"). Aristotle, like Plato, finds it difficult to explain these two negative forms of activity which are not part of the universal order, and which are manifested in monstrosities, catastrophes, poor fortune and disgrace. He attempts to explain this by stating that they do not exist at the origin (nature-art), but at the terminus. Hence they produce effects equal to art and nature, but they lack finality.[443] However, today we would call this a tautology.

7. *The Physics of Living Beings*

Aristotle states, "The study of life, helps a great deal in the knowledge of nature (*De Anima*, 402 a 5)". This indicates the close connection between the physics of inorganic and organic beings. The difference derives from the fact that the movement of living beings possesses an intrinsic principle, called "psyché" or "soul".

Aristotle dedicated various writings to this problem, such as *De sensu*, *De sommiis*, *Parva naturalia*, etc. The most important of these writings is entitled *De anima*, which was certainly completed around 335.[444] This work is divided into three parts: in the first, historical section, Aristotle rejects the theory of the soul as self-moving (Plato), as harmony (Pythagoreans), as a tenuous body (the materialists). In the second and third parts he considers the analogical concept of the soul which is defined as "the prime form of the physical and organic body, which possesses life in potency". The soul is an "existent essence" ('entelécheia", "eîdos") a dynamic and expansive act of a real ("physical", not mathematical) body which possesses organs ("organic") or instruments adapted for development, such as roots, a trunk and leaves on a tree, or hands, feet and a head for animals, etc. These they possess in potential conditions.

Still, what is the meaning of "in potency" or "in potential conditions"? Aristotle considers the soul or vital principle to be co-present and immanent in the animate body. He intends to state that the soul is the finalised, fundamental and intrinsic origin ("entelécheia"), and hence it is ready to produce movement. The "second acts" are active potencies or functions, such as the intellect, will, locomotive faculties, fantasy, etc. From this we see that Aristotle did not conceive the soul as coming before the body; here we can see veiled polemics against the Platonic theory of the reincarnation of men's and animals' souls, as Aristotle proposes a unified vision of the living being.

Special attention is given to sensitive life, which is expressed through activities in which we must distinguish objects, acts, organs and faculties. For example, the activity of seeing implies, respectively, colours, vision, the eye, and sight. Therefore, in addition to the three functions proper to plants, the animals possess *five external* and *four internal senses*. There are *five external senses* (although touch seems to be presented as a genus including other specific senses, as modern psychology has confirmed.) The *internal senses* are common sense, fantasy, memory and instinct.

The objects are proper, common and accidental. *Proper objects* are tastes, sounds, odours, colours, and rough or smooth surfaces.[445] The *common objects* are movement, figure, number, largeness and calm. These are not perceived by only one sense, but by many senses operating simultaneously, which can only occur if the soul has an internal "common sense" unifying exterior sensations. The *accidental objects* are those that depend on a memory association. For example, one perceives something sweet when he sees honey. This operation depends on common sense, which also possesses self-perception, in that it feels the fact that it has feeling and has the capacity to distinguish the contributions of the individual external senses.

Fantasy preserves and reproduces images, and is often a cause of error. Memory preserves sensory images, and instinct is the internal faculty for the perception of objects necessary for the animal.

In addition to sensibility, the soul of animals possesses appetite and locomotion.

Book III, 4–5 considers the faculties of the rational animal: intelligence and will.[446] Aristotle studied the intelligence: a) in reference to the senses, and b) in itself. In reference to the senses, man possesses a faculty ("mórion") which is impassable ("apathés"), not subject to the inferior world. This faculty is "non-mixed" (amigés"), not bound to matter. On the other hand, it is "receptive" to the intelligible ("to dektikón"), insofar as the inferior world leaves an imprint on it without contaminating it, as the imprint of a ring on wax would do. Therefore, it is like a tablet on which nothing is written, but on which everything can be written.[447]

This capacity or potentiality (dynatón") is not comparable to that of the senses, which, because of the intensity of the object, are numbered to the point of damaging the sensory organ (note the eyes which stare at the sun). On the contrary, not only is this potentiality distinct from the object ("choristón"), but it actively dominates the object ("hìna kratei") through the process of segregation ("chorízien") and abstraction ("apháiresis") of the respective matter's essences. "The thinking mind is incapable of suffering, but is capable of perceiving the forms" (De Anima 408 b 29). Therefore, along with Plato (Aristotle exclaims) we may state that this capacity is "tópos eidôn". If, instead, we consider *intelligence in itself*, then it is immaterial, and hence it is not only intelligent, but also intelligible and transparent to itself. Therefore, in the act of intelligence, the object and subject identify with one another, or, as Aristotle said, the "intellectus in actu est intellectum in actu".

At this point, Aristotle poses the following question: why is such a universal and spiritual faculty not always active? Already in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, he had facetiously observed that mortals spend half of their lives sleeping (I, 13), so that in this respect there is no difference between the happy and the unhappy. Aristotle replies in the third chapter, number 5, and his reply has been a delight and torture to philologists from Alexander of Aphrodisias to the present day. He states that "there are two differences in the soul" ("diaphoraí"), which are similar to the efficient and passive character of material nature. Therefore, there is an intellect which is receptive (passive) and in its essence can become everything ("ho noûs toî pánta gínesthai") and a constructive intellect, which can do everything ("ho dè toî pánta poîen"), which is called "to poietikón". The latter acts on the former in the guise of a faculty ("héxis"), just as light realises potential colours. This latter intellect subsists essentially as act ("ousía ón energéiai"). Therefore, it is separate in its operations ("choristheís"), impassible and unmixed. Being active, it is superior to the other intellect, just as act is superior to potency. Therefore, it is this intellect which understands in continuity and not through intervals; this is a wisdom in act. Separated from the body after death, it remains what it is, since it is subsistent and hence immortal. The passive-receptive intellect ("ho noûs pathetikós"), which does not understand anything without the active intellect, is corruptible.

It should be mentioned here that the above passage has led to an extremely long exegetic debate. On the one hand, Alexander of Aphrodisias, Averroes (a twelfth-century Arab philosopher), Siger of Brabant (thirteenth century), Pomponazzi (sixteenth century), and more recently Zeller, Ross and Nuyens, state that the active intellect is not personal, but is common and one for all men (monopsychism). It is God (Ross), or an intelligence inferior to God, like the astral souls (Averroes said that it is the lunar intelligence). Naturally, monopsychism attributes to Aristotle the doctrine of the soul's personal mortality.

The opposite interpretation (with which we agree) makes the agent intellect a faculty of the human soul. This was supported by Theophrastus, Ammonius, Thomas Aquinas, Rolfes, Brentano and De Corte, who understood in a spiritual sense the famous expression: "the intellect enters from without" (*De part. anim.*, 17 b).[448] It suffices to observe that in the *Eudemian Ethics* (VII, 2) Aristotle states that, even if human fortune and misadventure cannot be attributed to God, man's "noûs", which is divine, is still moved by God (VIII, 2 1248 a 24–29).

Certainly Aristotle, remaining faithful to Plato, faced the grave problem which arose from his philosophy of matter and form, and which we pose in the form of a dilemma. Either the soul is "psyché", a form of the body which is hence not immortal, in that it is also the source of biological activities, or it is a spirit ("noûs"), in which case it is not a form. Obviously, these doubts do not regard immortality, but the mode of union between the soul and body in this life.

CHAPTER TWELVE

ETHICS, LOGIC, POLITICS AND POETICS OF ARISTOTLE

1. *Ethics*

Aristotle classifies some disciplines in a "practical" sector (cfr. Part III, Ch. 10, n. 1), insofar as their object is not wisdom ("theoreîn") strictly speaking, but a human activity which termintes with man. They distinguish themselves in the fact that their object is human action, which is directed toward the inferior world. Instead, the object of the "practical" sciences is an object or term which coincides with the principle; these activities flow from man and end with man. Aristotle places ethics among these disciplines; this theme is discussed in some fragments of the *Protrepticus* and in the three *Ethics* we have today: the *Eudemian Ethics*, the *Magna Moralia* (let the reader not be fooled; this is the shortest of the three. It seems that the name came from grammarians, who had it in the form of "large scrolls"), and the *Nicomachean Ethics*, dedicated perhaps to his son.[449]

There are two questions regarding Aristotelian ethics, one philosophical and one exegetical. *Philologically*, Werner Jäger's study has raised the question of the internal and external connection of the three *Ethics*. According to his method of spiritual evolution, he divides Aristotle's moral doctrine into three stages: a) Platonic ethics, in the *Protrepticus*; b) ethics of transition, in the *Eudemian Ethics* and in *Magna Moralia*; c) sociological ethics in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. This thesis was partly satisfactory to R. A. Gauthier – Y. J. Jolif (who prepared a famous edition and commentary of the *Nicomachean Ethics* in four volumes, Louvain, second edition 1970), to the point of considering *Magna Moralia* spurious and attributing it to Theophrastus as a compendium of he other two works. After this, H. J. Krämer entered the debate with his notable studies (*Arete bei Platon und Aristoteles*, *Zum wesen und zur Geschichte der platonischen Ontologie*, Abh Heidel. Ak. d. Wiss. phil.-hist. K1. 1959), as did F. Dirlmeier (*Aristoteles*, *Werke*, Hesg. von E. Grumach, 6 volumes, Berlin). Basing his thought on Dirlmeier's conclusions, Düring entered the discussion by dismantling Jäger's thesis and stating that if the philosopher's spiritual evolution existed, then it would be an enormous error to affirm that the *Magna Moralia* is spurious or that the *Nicomachean Ethics* is sociological. In Italy, Armando Plebe ("La posizione storica dell' *Etica Eudemia* e dei *Magna Moralia*", in *Rivista critica di filosofia* XVI, 1961, pp. 131–152) rejected Dirlmeier's thesis, according to which the *Eudemian Ethics* would be more Platonic than the *Magna Moralia*. As we can see, the discussion on this subject is still far from closed; it suffices to note than in 1969 a symposium on the *Eudemian Ethics* took place (in Canada), in the presence of the most notable Aristotelian scholars (cfr. R. Budéüs, "Contribution à l'histoire des oeuvres morales di Aristote les Testimonia", in *Revue Philosophique de Louvain*, 71, 1973, pp. 451–467).

In my opinion, we cannot deny a certain difference between the three *Ethics*, although they all rest on an aristocratic and Platonic foundation. Moreover (and all agree on this point), the *Eudemian Ethics* and the *Magna Moralia* were probably written around 340, even if they were revised and expanded later. On the contrary, the *Nicomachean Ethics* was a conclusive work, probably written around 330. Third, the *Eudemian Ethics* and *Magna Moralia* contain more profound vestiges of the Platonic ideal. True, the ideal of "eudaimonia" or happiness is the same; but they are contained within different frameworks. Therefore, I propose the following outline:

	Type	Origin	Subject	Quality	End
Eudemian Ethics	ethics of the gift	from God through "manteia alogos"	privileged man	ethics of salvation	contemplation: primacy of the "theoria"
Magna Moralia	of exercise	of the natural impulse "hormè physiké"	serious man "spoudaîos"	humanistic	"theoria"
Nicomachean Ethics	of the effort in the exercise	"force": nature gives us the "dynamis", but not the virtues	serious man	"eudemonistic"	perfection of the moral act sustained by the virtues

Since the *Magna Moralia* in effect contains some books of the *Eudemian Ethics*, for *philosophical and presentational purposes,* a few remarks about the *Eudemian Ethics* and *Nicomachean Ethics* will suffice.

The *Eudemian Ethics*, following the inspiration of *Protrepticus*' triad wisdom-virtue-joy, proposes a contemplative ethical ideal in tension toward divinity. In order to act, man needs the "phronesis" (in the Platonic sense), a wisdom which is more an instinct than a human knowledge. This a "virtue" of the intellect and not a "science", a norm of action which is given to us through divine inspiration ("mantéia"). Therefore, moral life is a "bíos theoretikós", an aspiration to knowledge of the divine, leaving aside popular opinions (*Ibid.*, 1215 a 5). From these heights, man almost infallibly acquires the value of concrete action. This is an "application" ("epitaktikón") of the ideals of the serious man ("spoudaîos anér") to daily events; happiness derives from it, but this happiness remains provisory, since it would have been better not to be born ("mè genésthai", 1215 b 16). Therefore, God is the object of aspiration and of cult ("ho theòs anéchetai dynamim lambánon tàs thysías", 1243 b 29). He accepts our sacrifice of friendship; a life which would not attempt to "know and serve God" would be sad indeed.[450]

The doctrinal framework of the *Nicomachean Ethics* is different. First, it differs in the method, in that the sense of moral life is not explored working from presuppositions or general axioms (as we see in Plato, who works from the principle of an absolute Good to arrive at conclusions in the field of morals), but based on "the senses, habits and customs" (I, 7). Therefore, we must also listen to what the common man has to say, and not entrust ourselves to the syllogism (I, 8). It is necessary to work from immediate facts ("phainómena gnórima", 1095 a 19) as they emerge from the conduct of man living in society (méthodos politiké", *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1104 b 12), without the pretext of immediately reaching absolute conclusions. The objects of this method of experience are moral acts, which are variable and concrete ("tó hóti", 1095 a 19).[451]

However, the method must not be confused with the *philosophical doctrine*, which is based on the "télos". The human being's moral act must be good. However, goodness is not will (Kant); goodness is the free act, which expresses itself in choice, which is illuminated by the object as it is presented by the intelligence or practical reason. The "proáiresis", or choice, is regulated by the end, by objective human goods according to a moral judgement ("phrónesis"), which is a "practical habit" ("héxis praktiké").[452] In fact, "we are neither good nor evil by nature" (*Nicomachean Ethics* II, 5). Beatitude is neither a divine gift nor a gift of nature, but a laborious conquest. "There is happiness in the other life? But this is simply absurd [pantelôs àtopon]; it could not be otherwise for us, who state that happiness is an act." ("enérgeia"-I, 10).

The good act requires the support of the virtues ("areté" – an act does not make a virtue, just as one swallow does not make a springtime), which is defined as a "habit of correct appetite" ("héxis horthês horéxeos"), i.e. a stable disposition of the character toward good. Every virtue presupposes three elements: the passions, the faculty and the habit ("habitus"). The passions allow prudence to establish a correct middle road and without which the extremes touch one another, just as a coward may be bold and a miser may be a spendthrift (*Eudemian Ethics*, 1234 a 34). The faculties distinguish the virtues into ethical and dianoetical ones. The ethical virtues are fortitude, temperance, prudence and justice; their contraries are the vices, of which the most dangerous are wickedness, dissoluteness and fierceness. Aristotle declares his practice of temperance from his adolescent days by guarding against intemperance and incontinence. The dianoetical virtues are science, wisdom and the "intellectus" ("noûs"), the function of which it is to regulte prudence.

Aristotle dedicates particular attention to the study of justice, friendship and pleasure ("hedoné").[453] This is the crown of human life, insofar as true friendship is virtuous, and wishes good, not only something useful and pleasing. Therefore, "it is not the same thing to be good citizens and to be good men"; and Aristotle observes that, although happiness is conditioned by society, nevertheless it is an event or personal state of the "interior man" (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 117 a).

Here a problem arises: is the happiness which derives from the virtues also supernatural? First of all, Aristotle guarantees the existence of a terrestrial happiness which is neither absolute nor definitive, but shows in various existential situations "how a man can be blessed" (1101 a 20–21). Regarding the future life, Aristotle (as we have seen) does not believe a coherent discourse to be possible; but he admits that, on this earth, happiness (which is an act – "enérgeia" – similar to the Act of God) makes man familiar with God ("theophiléstatos", 119 a 12). However, this is done only by the sages. On the other hand, of all beings, man is the one most loved by the gods (*Nicomachean Ethics* X, 8), but not in the sense that the gods need friends. Friendship serves to know oneself in one's friend. But God knows himself perfectly and hence has no need for friendship with others to realise his self-knowledge. "He thinks only of himself" (*Eudemian Ethics*, 1245 b 14–18).

These are the limits of pagan ethics; what was lacking was a deeper knowledge of human freedom and of God's goodness.

2. *Politics*

Aristotle, together with Plato, was the founder of politics as science. As a young man, he had written some works (now lost, including *On Justice* and *Politicus*) which derived directly from his teacher's ideas. However, it was his work *Politics*, written in the form of seven books after 335, which (although it has a disorganised sequencing) represents his first systematic treatment of the subject. There are two distinguishing characteristics between Aristotelian and Platonic political doctrines: the method and the system.

Regarding method, Aristotle realised that the study of social life ends with change, with the possibilities of development within the "polis", where the particular ends of the citizens coincide with the common good (tautòn estin henì kaì pólei" – *Politics* VII, 1324 a 5–8). Therefore, it is not easy to examine the dynamic framework which animates the life of a community. Hence we have Aristotle's frequent references to history (he mentions the great legislators of the past, from Solon to Caronda, from Lycurgus to Zaleuch, etc.), and past constitutions of the most famous "States" or "poleis", such as Sparta, Crete, Carthage, Syracuse, Marseilles, etc. We know that he managed to collect 158 constitutions of that epoch; of these only one was discovered (in 1891), entitled *The Constitution of the Athenians*. The adaptability of his method allowed him to discuss civil freedom not abstractly, but according to the concrete condition of the free citizens in his time. Hence his theory of the State and its forms is not constructed working from an abstract concept of "substance", but from "quality and quantity" (*Ibid.* IV, 1296 b 17). He worked from the various forms of government ("téchne"), procedure ("méthodos"), action ("práxis") and choices ("proaíresis") of political groups. He does not agree with the Platonic utopias on familial communism and on property, nor did he accept the Phoenician myth of the inexorable degenerative cycle of governmental forms (V, 10). His own theory of the "best State" is not presented as an ideal form, but as something "hopeful" ("euchoméne"), as a major, long-term program.

Regarding the *systematic character* of his views, it should be mentioned that the *Politics* is not considered an organic and unified work, nor is it complete. It is more an encyclopaedic than a symmetrical discourse; hence the passage from one subject to another, often without any visible transition: familial economy, politics, civic education, rights of citizens, democracy, civil freedom, revolutions, the constitution, slavery, etc.

From the method and encyclopaedic character of the work, we can understand how Aristotle defines politics as "a certain knowledge" ("gnôsis") derived from the descriptive study of history and the phenomenology of political events ("historia"), rather than a true science. Only false theories can pretend to construct "scientific discourses" ("lógoi epistémes") on this matter. When the reference is to "events in full development" ("tà prágmata phyómena blépei" – I, 1), then it suffices to consider politics a "technical knowledge" ("technikónti"), without any pretext of aspiring to the theoretical sciences.

The foundation of Aristotelian politics is constructed on a base of which the prime data is the family nucleus ("oikìa próte"). This nucleus has various strata, based on the various relations that its members have with each other, which are not based on the respective consciousness they have ("epistéme") of relation, but on the natural and specific structure of the family ("tò toiónd' eînai" – 1255 b 22), and on the exercise ("chrêsis") or dynamism existing between the members. There exists: a) the royal or monarchical power which finds the father to the children, founded on profound love and on the duration of relations; b) the marital power over the wife: Aristotle always considered the woman inferior to the man, for philosophical and psychological reasons; c) the despotic power over one's servants; and d) the crematistic faculty, or the administration of riches and family goods through hunting, agriculture and shepherding.[454] Commerce is allowed, but not usury (lending at exorbitant rates of interest).

Aristotle states that "by nature" there are slaves or servants, those men who in the body and/or in their spirit do not hold mastery over themselves and hence may be the object of others' possession. Aristotle sees (with some disturbance on his part) the difficulties of this thesis, which makes the slave a "living, separated instrument" ("órganon émpsychon choristón") in the hands of his master. He admits that it is in the interest of the master to treat the slave well, using friendship. The slave is a subject for education (1255 b 18) and is a moral being.[455] At the beginning of the *Politics*, he states that the distinction between slaves and free men is not natural ("physei"), but legal ("nómoi"), and hence "is not just, but violent" (I, 3, 3). Even further weakening his original position, he states that slavery is due to ignorance, to the point where there is a difference between slave and worker. This difference arises because the former is semi-servant, not by nature, but by chance, even if in practice they live in an equal political condition. Hence Aristotle seems to be implicitly stating that scientific work can annul slavery. Finally, he seems to justify slavery for contingent reasons, citing the backward state of contemporary industry. He says, "If every [inanimate] instrument were to perform its task on command and with premeditation, like the automatic mechanisms attributed to Daedalus, if the spools were to weave automtically and the plectra were to play the lyre, then constructors would have no need for workers, nor would masters need slaves" (1253 b 10). Today's industrial and technological progress demonstrates the sharpness of Aristotle's vision, which anticipated modern automation.

From the family Aristotle ascends to the village, and from the village he continues to the "polis". Here he discovers that "man is by nature a political animal". He is not social because of a contract or alliance (III, 9) as some iusnaturalists wrote in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but by "nature" and fact. Man does not become social (political); he is born that way, because biological life does not suffice. A "good living" ("hêu zên")[456] is necessary, and this is provided by the Community.

Still, not all those living in the "polis" are citizens in act. Children, peasants, workmen, those performing public work, and slaves working for families can only participate in the common good in the most limited fashion, if at all. The "telos" – that is, the effective participation in construction – is direct, and not representative (as it is today). This participation forms the "community" ("koinonía"), whose goal is neither war, nor commerce, nor mere survival, but living well for virtue (III, 5). To obtain "koinonía", it does not suffice to equalize property (this against Platonic thought), but to level off greed. An exaggerated unification of citizens within the State would transform the "koinonía" into a family ("oikía"). But the "polis" is one precisely because it is varied, both in its components (individuals in families, families in villages, villages in the "polis") and in its functions. Therefore, the best State must not be too extended or too populous. Aristotle ironically observes that, just as to navigate one does not use a boat that would fit in one's palm nor a ship two stadia long (VII, 4), so the "polis" should hopefully not be too vast or too small. Aristotle considered about 20,000 citizens along a seacoast as optimal, with plazas in which each of the inhabitants could make himself heard by all.[457]

He distinguishes various functions ("mória") in the State: the council of State, the magistracy, judicial functions (V, 11, 12, 13). The magistrates would have a variety of functions: a) those assigned to commerce, the fine arts and urban studies; b) architects and builders; c) inspectorate of agriculture; d) inspectorate of provisions and treasury; e) inspectorate for civil and penal matters; f) priests (VII, 7).

Aristotle wrote some illuminating pages on the causes of revolution and forms of State. These forms are divided into two groups of three, one good and one evil. The good forms are monarchy, aristocracy and democracy. The corrupt forms are tyranny (ambitious power), oligarchy (boundless riches) and demagogy (government of the ragamuffins). The government of the rich men is as disastrous as that of the ragamuffins; the best state is a mixed one, where the middle class prevails.

Aristotle dedicates the final books to education (VII, 15 – VIII), which is based on four disciplines: literature, music, painting and gymnastics. Also notable and acute are his observations on music, which is also useful for the "scholé", or refinement and culture. On the other hand, gymnastics helps in utilitarian areas and business. It seems that this view of education strives more to form the human person than the citizen.[458]

As we can see from this rapid review, in this area of Aristotle's thought emerge all the strong points and defects emerge which make his political conception highly scientific, but somewhat biased.

3. *Logic*

The world "logic" as the art of human reasoning is of Stoic origin. Aristotle, although he used the word "logikós" and other similar terms, calls this discipline "analytics". Nevertheless, we have a collection of six Aristotelian logical treatises, which Andronicus of Rhodes probably called the "Organ", or (scientific) instrument. This collection includes the *Categories*, *De Interpretatione*, *Prior Analytics*, *Posterior Analytics*, *Topics*, and *Sophistical Fallacies*.[459]

The title "Organon" indicates the meaning which Aristotle gives his logic. It is not a "theory", but a "praxis" or instrument, just as are ethics and politics. It is not a knowledge for itself, but a knowledge "for" something, a technique or preparation. As with ethics, it begins in the human subject and leads back to the human subject to form the scientific "habitus".

For a succinct and clear exposition, we may include in the chapter on logic the following disciplines, or parts, of Aristotelian logic: dialectics, elenchistics and analytics.[460]

Dialectics is the discipline which abstracts from the truth or falsity of the dispute (be it written or oral) and which furnishes the instruments to convince the listener, working from his own premise. The process of convincing does not differ from the rigorously scientific or (in logical terms) analytic one. "In analytics, the fundamental accent is placed on the internal structure of the syllogism. The premises must be true, and yet they always remain," as Kapp observes, "something which is made to tend to someone else, so that he may capture it."[461] Dialectics is a gymnastics of the intellect in casual discussion and scientific research, even when the supreme principles of science are sought. In fact, Aristotle observes that science is not necessary to refute an adversary (Sophistical Fallacies, 172 a 21–27); what suffices is knowledge (common to all men) of the principles common to all things. From this point of view, all men are dialecticians, but not necessarily scientists (*ibid.*, 34–36). Therefore, sometimes dialectics end with probability, sometimes with truth. The result depends on the fact that dialectics are a "technique of research" (in Greek, "peirastiké", or attempt at research) which uses induction, the (dialectic) syllogism, the enthymeme, and every other forml logical process.

Elenchistics is a type of dialectics, and like dialectics, it consists of a study of various argumentative techniques. The difference is that the latter helps in discovering incorrect processes. Therefore, in the *Topics* (a work dedicated to the "Sophistical listings", or erred argumentations), Aristotle considers the "list", which is a syllogism true only in appearance, since it contains errors "in dictione" (homonyms, amphibology, composition, division, accent and figure) or "extra dictionem" (like the so-called "ignorantia elenchi", or ignorance of the argument being discussed). Other sophistic procedures are falsity (or accusation of falsehood), paradox, solecism, tautology and cavilling. It is clear that the *Topics* contain a collection of argumentative exercises which were in vogue at philosophical schools of that era (especially for the Megarians), and they also represent an effort to discover the tricks of the discourse. As Düring states, this might surprise us; but in those times these exercises were games similar to our quiz shows.[462]

Analytics, which Aristotle discusses in his two major logical works, *Prior Analytics* and *Posterior Analytics*, regards the elation between names and things. For clarity's sake, we summarise this in the following Aristotelian outline:

a) relations between thoughts and things = *gnoseology*,[463]
b) relations between words and things, as opinion = *dialectics*;
c) relations between words and things, erroneous = *sophistic elenchistics*;
d) relations between words and things, in true form = *analytics*;
e) relations between words and human affections = *rhetoric.*

Analytics considers words in connection with things, insofar as words are an instrument to indicate things ("deiktikós"), insofar as they are semantic or indicate things' meaning. Commenting on Hermogenes' theses (cfr, the Platonic *Cratylus*), Aristotle states that "names are indicative of reality only when they are symbols of reality" ("physei tôn onomàton oudèn estin, all'hótan génétai symbolon" – *De Interpretatione*, 16 a 27). But not all things are susceptible to vocal expression, insofar as there exists a disproportion between things and words. Things are infinite; words are limited and thus conventional. Hence we have the necessity for determining by defining ("hóros") the meaning of every word through the genus and specific difference, so that its semantic function may be perfect ("eph'hekástoi lógoi" – *Metaphysics*, 1006 b 1). There is another consequence: not all words are semantic, and hence a logical foundation is needed (*De Interpretatione*, 17 a 1–17), a criterion which only some rarely meet. In this case the words refer to rhetoric and poetry. The instrument of the semantic *analysis* of words, for the resolution ("analysis") of everything in its parts, is the judgement or proposition ("lógos").

n fact, this proposition either regards the existent and produces a udgement of existence, or it regards the essences and produces udgement with a copula.[464] These latter can be divided into elative, contrary and contradictory, according to the relations etween the elements or parts, between the subject and the redicate. The laws of opposition and conversion of modal, ontingent and necessary propositions are given special attention y Aristotle, who also feels himself to be the discoverer of the efinition and laws of the syllogism. He also determined the natter, form and figure of syllogisms. The syllogism is scientific or lemonstrative when it is not only correct (otherwise, it would be ophistic), but also true and certain (otherwise, it would be lialectic). Aristotle's logic, as we have briefly explained it, epresents one of the highest conquests of human thought, and it as remained such even after Bacon's *Novum Organum*, Kant's nalytics and modern symbolic logic.

4. *Rhetoric and Poetics*[465]

We conclude our review of Aristotle's writings by briefly outlining two themes which especially interested the great philosopher: rhetoric and poetry. He taught rhetoric at the beginning of his professorial apprenticeship under Plato. In 362 he published his first work, the Gryllus which was a polemical writing against Isocrates' rhetoric. Soon after he wrote the treatise entitled *Rhetoric*, developing themes which were being studied at the time by logographers, orators and philosophers, particularly by Plato in his dialogues *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*. Aristotelian rhetoric, which remained bound to Platonic ideals, is considered "antistrophic", with "counterpositions", and with reciprocity regarding dialectics.[466] It can be defined as a mastery ("dynamis") possessed by the orator of the means to gain listeners. Its object is not the "ousia", or a completed reality, but a dynamic process of the orator using both dialectics and analytics. The goal is to persuade, to influence the affections, persuasions and opinions of the listener ("doxa", "eoikós").

Therefore, there are three elements: a) *the orator*, who must possess good sense, integrity, benevolence, and above all good psychological penetration of his listeners; b) *the means are dialectics and analytical logic*: either *related to the present*, for discourses of praise and eulogy, or, on the contrary, for censure (*epidictic*); or *related to the future*, for deliberation and counsel (*deliberative*); or *in relation to the past*, for judicial debate, as is done by lawyers (*judgemental*); d) the end of rhetoric is not "seduction of souls" (psychagogy), but to convince according to what is probable. Indeed, what distinguishes Aristotelian rhetoric from that of Isocrates, Cicero, Quintilian and Renaissance speakers is the orator's goal, who must not flatter the "pathos" of his listeners with artifices of discourse (preface, exposition, epilogue, proofs, interrogations and perorations), but he must above all adopt a "science" ("epistéme") which wins the public over.

This implies that the orator has a knowledge of differential psychology (see Aristotle's specific analysis of the character of youths, the elderly, nobles and plebes – II, 12, 13, 14, 15), as well as the ability to use various styles: frigid, full of imagery, robust, plebeian, drastic, etc. The philosophical character of Aristotelian rhetorics derives from the analysis of dialectical and logical means. Aristotle mentions a "major Topics", which use possible means according to one's science, and a "minor Topics", which examine whether the enthymeme is true (there are 28 forms of true enthymemes), or apparent (there are 8 forms of this: elocution, separation, exaggeration, indication, by incidence, by consequence, by substitution, etc.)

If Aristotle's *Rhetorics* only enjoyed a small measure of success in antiquity, then Poetics is most important for the study of ancient aesthetic styles and canons, from Horatius until Tasso and Milton. The work we possess has 28 chapters, 5 of which are introductory, 6–22 consider tragedy, 23–24 study the epic, and 25–28 review both styles. He rejects Plato's condemnation of art (that art is unreal, useless, immoral and provokes the passions); because, in general, art in its perfect form is primarily educational and moral.

The Greeks ignored the modern principle of "art for art's sake".[467]

In its psychological origin, art is similar to science. Man first captures the world through sensations, which produce memory when they are preserved. Adult memory becomes experience, which is a rational-scientific knowledge, and above all a chance and manual production ("cheirotéchne"). From adult and refined experience come science and art ("téchne"), whose universal object (tò dióti") is not pure fact ("tò hóti" – Metaphysics, 1085 b 18 ff). Therefore, the artist must possess an intelligent and receptive temperament regarding reality.

In its content, art is more than a sudden inspiration. It is a propensity acquired through learning ("máthesis"); it is not as a divine gift (Plato) or natural genius. This propensity or habit consists of the placing into a determined portion of matter ("hyle") "lógos" which gives the splendour of the universal. This "logos" is placed in canvas, in marble, or in a rhythm or a poem. It is interesting to follow Aristotle in this subject when he detaches himself from Plato. Aristotle states that when the masterpiece is completed ("génesis"), then the work is an imitation (mímesis") of reality, but it leaves the world of phenomena and becomes a "possible being", or a universal ("tò dynatòn genésthai" – *Nicomachean Ethics* VI, 1140 a ff., *Poetics*, 9).

In this case, "to imitate" ("mímesis") does not mean to copy, reproduce or reflect inferior nature because nature, although it possesses an intrinsic principle, is not beautiful. It is the artist who impresses the principle of beauty from without.[468] Here we see the difference between the Platonic "mímesis" (understood as a detachment from the ideas) and the Aristotelian "mímesis" which, based on the positive value of matter and "nature", gives the artist the creative force of the matter's "eîdos" or "lógos". Nevertheless, neither philosopher recognised natural beauty.

The "lógos" impressed by the artist on the matter makes the work universal, and thus art is "more philosophical and more serious" than history (Chapter 9).

Having considered the general character of poetry, Aristotle examines tragedy more minutely. There are three elements of tragedy, as there are for all arts: the mode, the object and the mimetic means. *In their mode*, the arts are narrative or dramatic; *in the imitated object*, the arts are serious if they imitate heroic gestures and comic if they imitate vulgar gestures (for example, tragedy and comedy, epics and parodies, the serious sculpture of Polignetus and the comical sculpture of Thasios). The *mimetic means* are threefold: rhythm, harmony and metre. Used separately, the mimetic means create, for example, dance (number). Used together, they create various genres, such as tragedy, epics and elegies.

At this point, Aristotle outlines his theory on tragedy, which is defined as "an imitation of serious gestures concluded in themselves, having a certain amplitude, an ornate locution in relation to the various moments of development, and the conduct of certain persons who act on the stage without narrating. Finally, it will produce, through piteous or terrible facts, the catharsis of these passions" (*Poetics* VI, 1449 b). Here we can easily trace the application of his general artistic theory: a) *object*: probable, serious and conclusive gestures which are unified within the framework of vicissitudes and episodes; b) *mode*: dramatic, with elevated language; c) *means*: noble expression; d) *end*: catharsis.

There has been much debate on the value of Aristotelian catharsis. Many philosophers and men of letters attribute this catharsis to the spectator, insofar as he is free from fear or excessive tenderness. Some interpret it in the physiological-medical way of elimination (Theophrastus, Corneille, Racine, Milton, Lessing); others in a psychic or Freudian way, where the passions are first awakened, then elevated and transfigured[469] (Bignami, Abbagnano, Chevalier and the supporters of psychoanalysis); others in an aesthetic (Croce, Valgimigli) or hedonistic (Terzaghi) sense. A new interpretation has been proposed by H. Timpanaro Cardini[470] and (independently, it seems) F. Else,[471] according to whom the catharsis does not regard the poetry, but the poet himself, who purifies his personages from the less noble passions. Hence trgedy is "perfect" before it is even represented, notwithstanding the exaggerations or whims of the actors. Hence the "mimesis" does not exclude, but strengthens the poet's creativity. The "poeîn" is to be attributed more to the one who "does" ("poietés") than to the spectator. Therefore, the most beautiful tragedy is not the one which takes away the passions of those coming to the theatre, but the one whose personages are transfigured by the poet. This is affirmed by Aristotle himself (*Poetics*, 1452 b 6 ff.) when discussing *Oedipus*, where the unhappy king recognises himself to be "impure", "atheist", "wicked" and "impious". The confession is a purification; the catharsis is almost a mystical experience which the poet transcribes into the personages. The fact that the spectators participate "in the pain and horror" of the scene does not change the tragic figure of the hero.

This interpretation seems quite original to me and better describes the Aristotelian analysis of poetry in itself, and not in its effects. He states: "Pain and horror can arise from the show, but it also arises from the very manner of developing the scene; this is the first gift of the better poet" (1453 b 1–3).

5. *Conclusion*

Aristotle is the Platonic thinker who saved the "ideas" of his teacher by grounding them in reality, as had already been attempted in the *Timaeus*. With this operation philosophy developed into a theory of the concrete. In this way, Aristotle satisfied the requirement of retracing the word to thought and thought to being, a task begun by Socrates and continued by Plato. Aristotelian philosophy *is* the "science of being" in all its multiform appearances. If there is one danger in this system, it is to stop at the individual sectors of the exploration of being, only to detach them from philosophy. In this fashion, philosophical research would either be transformed into a science or would become an encyclopaedia without any metaphysical meaning.

These two directions already showed themselves in the works of the early Peripatetic Academy. Geometry was born (Euclid), as was geography (Eratosthenes) and astronomy (Callippus). Even Theophrastus, the teacher's successor, in his Metaphysics opens the way to Stoicism with his partial break from Aristotelian ontology.

PART FOUR

FOURTH PERIOD

THE HELLENISTIC AND ROMAN PERIOD

CHAPTER ONE

THE ACADEMY AND THE PERIPATETIC SCHOOL

1. *Preliminary Notes*

The fourth period of the history of ancient philosophy includes a long period time: from the death of Aristotle (322 B.C.) until the second century A.D. Spatially, it embraces all the regions in which Greek culture spread after the fall of the Macedonian Empire. Its influence was felt from Syria to Asia Minor, Africa, and finally Rome. The most important centres, after Athens, were Alexandria, Rhodes, Pergamus, and Rome itself.

In this period, philosophy took two directions. *One was of qualitative regression*, during the reign of the three diadochs (Alexander the Great's successors): the kingdom of Macedonia, the Seleucidian kingdom of Syria and Asia, and Ptolemy's kingdom in Egypt. *The other direction was one of progress in the political-moral area*, during the first centuries of the Roman Empire.

From this simple statement arises the difficulty of unifying the two moments in one historical period. Roman philosophy did not change the face of Hellenistic philosophy but only added a certain vigour in the study of law, politics and morals. For this reason, we may state that there is a single thread of development in post-Aristotelian philosophy which can be traced through all five centuries of this period.

The precedents of Hellenistic philosophy are political. Three of

Alexander's generals founded three monarchies: Antigonus in Macedonia, Ptolemy in Egypt, and Seleuch in Syria. This eliminated the Greek "polis", and common political ideals crumbled when the citizen became a subject. Hence the new virtue was not to participate in civil life, but to harbour sentiments of escaping politics, sometimes including hostility and a defensive attitude regarding the intrusion of the monarchies. Politics detaches itself from morals, and living becomes an art of survival in an overturned and completely changed social world. Alexander the Great had demolished the myth of Greek supremacy, as he favoured mixed marriages with Persians, Syrians and Phoenicians; and he introduced the "common" Greek language ("koiné") into many of the conquered regions. In this fashion the racial prejudice between Greeks and barbarians, men and women, collapsed; and gradually a form of cosmopolitanism entered the attitude of all the peoples of the Mediterranean basin.[472]

Philosophy became the interpreter of this profoundly changed situation, taking on as its central problem the life of the individual. This individuality had been diminished in the series of the monarchs' wars of succession and was further reduced in the advance and conquest of the Roman dominion in 146 B.C. Philosophers stopped considering the great questions of being, of the "arché", of the Aristotelian "telos", and of the Platonic ideal world; and they sought refuge in moral problems. The material world still offered problematic aspects, but metaphysics was replaced with a new physics. This study of physics was not autonomous but took on a preparatory function for the knowledge of man. Individualism and cosmopolitanism were the two poles to which the new philosophy gravitated; this philosophy is called Hellenistic (and not Hellenic), insofar as it separates itself from the purer and higher Greek models. Also, this philosophy was cultivated by non-Greeks as well, albeit always using the Greek language of "koiné". Of all the peoples, only the Romans attempted to continue using their own language to create an autonomous philosophy, which nonetheless remained bound to the preceding traditions of Alexandria, Rhodes, Pergamus and Athens.

In its origin, Hellenistic philosophy uses Socrates and the pre-Socratics as its inspiration. In this themes, it restricts itself to anthropology, with a particular accent on ethics. The Socratic principle that virtue is science is replaced with the opposite axiom that science is virtue. In its goal, this philosophy strives for an emancipation from politics and for interior peace; in its tone, it is somewhat dogmatic, which is partly due to the influence of astrology and magic.[473]

A summary judgement would indicate a "speculative decadence" of the Greeks, which was a consequence of political decadence (with the passage from urban democracy to absolute monarchy), religious decadence (with the abandonment of ancient cults and the research of the occult and magic), moral decadence (with the rejection of the "sophia" and the adoption of a "phronesis" which tended to achieve individual tranquility, or "ataraxia").

However, 500 years is too long a time to be described with a univocal and peremptory judgement. We should also remember the new contributions of Hellenism: the progress of the sciences with the Peripatetic encyclopaedia, and the value of the Romans' juridical-political thought, which branched off from the secular trunk of Hellenic philosophy.

2. *History of The Academy*

Cultural changes in Greece also affected the two active philosophical schools, beginning with the Peripatetic School. With the large number of students (Diogenes Laërtius claimed that 'Theophrastus' teachings were heard by 2000 students) the school's speculation declined. Quantity and geographic extension supplanted quality. The Academy continued its activity until 270 with a cold and tired faithfulness embodied in its succession of "Scholarchs": Speusippus (died 339), Xenocrates (died 314) and Polemon (died 270).[474] In the years 264 – 240 the school was guided by Arcesilaus, who gave it a probabilistic direction accentuated by the sceptical views of Carneades (died 128). The change of direction was so complete that Arcesilaus is credited with founding the "Second Academy", with Carneades founding the "Third Academy". Philo of Laryssa founded the "Fourth Academy" in 88 B.C., with a moderate return to the dogmatism of the previous school, going back to Socrates' times. In 86 B.C., Silla destroyed the buildings of the school when he conquered Athens, which ended the Academy's days as a school. Antioch of Ascalon, the founder of the "Fifth Academy", returned to Athens from Rome but taught in the gymnasium of Ptolemy. The Academy remained a pilgrimage site, but it was no longer active as a university. The above-mentioned Antioch brought an end to the series of "Scholarchs" when he died in 68 B.C.[475] Antioch was also responsible for the school's electic direction, as he debated with Philo of Laryssa regarding the latter's concessions to earlier speculative probabilism. Cicero, who was inspired by Antioch, was not as important for his originality as he was for his capacity to present Greek doctrines in a brilliant way acceptable to the Romans.

We have already mentioned the deviations from Plato's teachings which the school indulged in (number 133). Speusippus, perhaps developing some of Plato's "unwritten" doctrines (cfr. above, number 110), gave the doctrine of ideas a mathematical and Pythagorean character. Xenocrates weakened the critical character of Platonic metaphysics by reducing its universal dimension and scholastically dividing it into logic, philosophy, ethics and physics. This remained unaltered for some centuries, as we can see in Diogenes Laërtius. Arcesilaus' Second Academy is more uncertain; Diogenes Laërtius delights more in describing banal episodes than in describing its philosophy. He says that Arcesilaus "was the first to modify the system handed down by Plato, making it more adaptable to controversies through questions and answers" (VI, 28); and "he also dedicated himself to dialectics, following the method of the Eretriacal school" (*ibid.*, 33). This latter school had sceptical tendencies. He introduced the gnoseological character of the reasonable ("eúlogon"), as well as the "suspension of judgement" ("epoché"), which was a way to combat the Stoics and agreed with the views of the Sceptics.

Regarding Carneades' Academy: he followed the Sceptical direction of Arcesilaus, while stating that one can choose the most convenient of two doubtful propositions. Moreover, instead of following Arcesilaus' thesis of reasonableness, he introduced the concept of the "persuadable" ("pithanón"). For his dialectical skills he was sent to Rome in 155 B.C. (along with Critolaus of the Peripatetic School and the Stoic Diogenes) to plead the case of Greece before the Roman Senate, and he left everyone spellbound with his oratory ability.

Still, in this fashion the legacy of Plato dissolved itself in empty disputes, academic exercises and sterile polemics with other schools. Philo of Laryssa and Antioch of Ascalon found a richer terrain for eclecticism in Rome.

3. *History of The Peripatetic School*

The events surrounding the Peripatetic School were different; but the differences are more visible not in Athens, but in its development in Alexandria and Rhodes.

After Aristotle's death, two currents in his school remained: one theoretical headed by Theophrastus, the teacher's successor; and the other headed by Decaearchus and oriented to political-practical studies. Theophrastus, having the support of the king's representative in Macedonia, Demetrius of Phalerus, received permission to enlarge the buildings and grounds. The Peripatetic School then was able to accept thousands of students and compete with other schools.

Theophrastus' (died 288) successor was Strato of Lampsacus (died 270), called the "physician" for the scientific spirit he gave the school. He was succeeded by Lycon and others of little importance,[476] who quickly led to the fall of Aristotelian thought.

Theophrastus was a very active teacher and writer. Diogenes

Laërtius lists 99 titles of his works; and he also transcribed three appendices with more titles (67, 27 and 21 respectively), bringing the total to 194. We have only a few complete works (*The Characters*, *Metaphysics*, *Historia plantarum*, *The Cause of Plants*, *Physical Opinions*) in addition to fragments gathered by F. Wimmer (*Theophrasti eresii Opera quae supersunt omnia*, Paris 1866, reproduced in Frankfurt in 1964).[477]

Theophrastus was not as simple repeater of his mentor's teaching, as has been erroneously stated by Gomperz, Zeller and Ross. On the contrary, he reconsidered Aristotle's conclusions and proposed a new critique, as we see in his *Metaphysics*[478] (also called *De philosophia prima*). While imitating the first book of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, he listed 20 objections against Aristotelian ontology. Among these were doubts regarding the absolute conjunction of the cosmos with God, because this obscures the concepts of being and substance (cfr. G. Reale's "ousiology" – pp. 138 ff.). For example, in Chapter 9 he gathers a provisory inventory of paradoxes against the finality of the universe: the uselessness of certain animals' organs and functions, like their fur, their growth, beards, the size of some animals' horns (which act as an impediment to flight), the ebb and flow of the ocean, etc. Theophrastus does not negate that there is a Principle of the universe; but this principle is no longer Aristotle's divine "noûs", but a type of Providence. The inferior world possesses a soul. All this demonstrates (as E. Grumach revealed in *Physis und Agathon in der alter Stoa*, Berlin 1932, along with other authors) that he is a destroyer of Aristotelian theology and a precursor of Stoicism. The ontological problem deteriorates into a cosmological one.

He corrected some points of his teacher's logic and ethics, especially in his original work. *The Characters*, where he examined thirty human types.[479] He believed that human happiness is not possible without a minimum of material goods, and that all men are equal, or – as he states – "similar and of the same class". We should also mention three other disciples of Aristotle; *Dicaearchus of Messene*, who opposed his teacher and exalted the primacy of the praxis, becoming a specialist in historical research (*Life of Greece*) and political questions (*Tripoliticus*); Aristoxenus of Tarentum, who studied music (*Harmony*), history (biographies of Pythagoras and Plato), and in line with his innate Pythagoreanism, he taught that the soul is harmony. *Eudemus of Rhodes*, to whom the *Eudemian Ethics* are dedicated, took the peripatetic tradition to his native island. *Heraclides Ponticus*, a student of Aristotle and Speusippus (cfr. Diogenes Laërtius VI, 6) studied ethics, poetry and music; but, as a good polemicist, he wrote harsh defamations against the Eleatics, Zeno and Democritus. *Demetrius Phalereus*, the Macedonian governor of Athens and a friend and student of Speusippus, travelled to Alexandria and founded a peripatetic school after acquiring a superlative knowledge in a variety of fields while in Athens. Of him Diogenes Laërtius writes: "He had a very high formation and a very rich experience; both in his quantity of books and in number of lines, he far surpassed the Peripatetics of his time. Some of his works are historical, others political, some consider poetry while others study rhetoric, in addition to collections of public and diplomatic discourses and Aesopic fables, along with many others" (V, 80). The biographer then lists 40 titles. In Alexandria he taught the king's son and future successor of Ptolemy Soter, Ptolemy Philadelphus, the great patron of art and literature who built a Museum (research institute) and two libraries with 700,000 pergamenes. The grandeur of his buildings surpassed even that of the Lycaeum in Athens, with a garden gymnasium, astronomical observatory, and a temple with a royally appointed priest. In Alexandria he gathered the brightest geniuses of the time, paying them from the public treasury. The philologists founded the study of grammar, mythology and history; the philosophers dedicated themselves to the sciences and became experts in mathematics, astronomy, medicine and geography. We only need mention Eratosthenes from the third century B.C., a founder of geography, and later Hipparchus and Sosigenes. The latter scholar prepared the data for Julius Caesar's reform of the calendar. Later, in the second century A.D. there was also the famous mathematician

Menelaus, the physician Soranus and the astronomer Ptolemy, along with Pappus, Theon, etc.[480]

Aristotle's cult in Alexandria assumed a tendency visible in the spirit of his philosophy: the encyclopaedia. In order to find an interst in Aristotle's works, we must wait for the great commentators of the second through the fourth centuries A.D.: Aspasios, Alexander of Aphrodisias (who commented on *De anima* and *De intellectu*,[481] and the commentaries on Aristotle's logic, metaphysics, etc.). Alexander's interpretation of the agent intellect is famous: it is God, extrinsic to man, and it has an indirect ("thyraten") influence on the passive intellect. However, a man with intellect can even mystically become similar to God. Other commentators were Temisthius (320–390), Elias, Philiponus and Simplicius.

CHAPTER TWO

EPICUREANISM

1. *Introductory Biographical Notes*

Epicureanism is one of the most significant events in Hellenistic philosophy. It not only confirms the new vision of the Greek world, but also reflects the particular formation and life of its founder, Epicurus (341–270).[482] Born in Samos of Athenian colonizers seven years after Plato's death, he received his first philosophical formation from the Platonist Pamphilus. However, he rebelled against his teacher; and after having followed Nausiphanes, a follower of Democritus, he quickly founded a school in opposition to the spiritualistic philosophies of that era: From the very beginning of his life he suffered a poor maternal education. (As Diogenes Laërtius writes) the family's morality was low, and he was infected with boundless ambition. His sarcasm and the vulgar fashion in which he refers to his teachers confirm his disdainful and mocking character and his indecorous life. Diogenes Laërtius writes, "Epicurus calls Nausiphanes a mollusc, an illiterate, a swindler and a harlot; the Platonists he called admirers of Dionysius, Plato himself a man of gold, and Aristotle a dissipater . . . Protagoras he called a porter and clerk and Democritus a mere teacher at village schools . . . " (X, 8). He called Socrates a buffoon, Chrysippus "Crysippa", etc. The haughty youth created rivalry and scandalised reactions, and from Samos he moved to Colophon in Asia, and later to Mitylene in 310 B.C. In Mitylene an Aristotelian school had been active for thirty years founded by Aristotle himself, and the members of this school could not tolerate Epicurus' presence. Finally, in 306, after a brief stay in Lampsacus, Epicurus, with the favour of women and potentates (he, who was scornful of politics) opened a school in Athens in a "garden" ("kêpos"), a solitary place which was a gathering-place for tired and dissolute scholars, including women.[483]

He wrote voluminously, in an unadorned style. Ancient historians claim that he wrote over 300 works (or scrolls), and that hence he was the most active of all philosophers. Among the "many and illustrious works", Diogenes Laërtius lists: *De natura* (*in 37 books*), *Atoms and Nothingness*, *Love*, *Epitome*, *The End*, *Fate*, *The Gods*, *Symposium*, etc. Very little has survived of this material: three letters of Epicurus to his students (Herodotus, Pythocles and Menaeceus, which were preserved by Diogenes Laërtius). There are also the *Capital Sentences*, 40 aphoristic propositions of an ethical-philosophical character preserved in an appendix of Diogenes Laërtius, and the *Vatican Gnomologion*, which was discovered in 1888 by Wokte in the Vatican Museum's Greek Codex number 150 from the fourteenth century. This work contains 81 sentences similar to those in the *Capital Sentences*, of which nine are identical. At the turn of the XIX century, at Oenoanda (Asia Minor) some wall writings from the Epicurean Diogenes (second century) were discovered, which contain fragments from the works on physics. They were recently published by various authors, among them Grilli (*Diogenis Oenoandensis Fragmenta*, Milan-Varese 1960) and M. F. Smith, who has studied the excavations from 1970–1976 and added new fragments. We should also mention some fragments from the Epicurean philosopher Philodemus of Gadara; some are found in the *Anthologia Palatina*, while others were gathered at the excavations of Herculanum. M. Gigante and W. Schmid have edited a revised and correct edition based on the *Glossarium Epicureum* of H. Usener, who in 1887 was the first to collect Epicurus' fragments.[484] Naturally, we may also use the references made by Lucretius in his poem *De rerum Natura* and the discourses of the philosopher Velleius, who intervenes as a follower of the school in Cicero's *De Natura deorum*.

2. *General Character of Epicurean Philosophy*

The study of Epicurus' writings also allows us to comprehend the fragments we have from his school, which was active until the beginning of the third century. Here we see the dogmatism that pervaded his teaching and the immense respect he received from his followers. After his death, he was saluted as "sotér", god the saviour; statues of him were erected, and every year his birthday was celebrated. A significant fact is that the wall writings discovered in Oenoanda, which are the most remote surviving fragments from the founder, give the same sentences as the original texts. This might surprise the reader: how could one venerate a man so scorned and a doctrine so individualistic? The response can be traced to third-century Greece. Ettore Bignone has demonstrated that Epicurus from the start combatted Aristotle's exoteric writings.[485] In other words, he was bothered by the ideal tension toward transcendence, the asceticism in acquiring moral virtue, and the desire for the divine. He abhorred metaphysical speculation; philosophy is not a "wisdom", an "epistéme" in itself. Philosophy must return to having the practical meaning it enjoyed in Heraclitus, Socrates, etc.; and it must exercise its ability to care for the soul. It was precisely this message that the Greek mind wished after Alexander the Great; this was a refuge, a consolation, a soothing and facile intimacy. This character of Epicureanism can be condensed into five theses:

a) *the primacy of lived life over speculation*, A knowledge which does not lead to a dedicated life is nothing. Epicurus said, "Vain is the discourse of those philosophers who could not appease man's suffering" (Usener, fragment 222). Therefore, philosophy is not a theory of spiritual medicine, but it is a medicinal energy, a vital faculty which does not indicate, but performs salvation. It is the "bonum consilium" adapted to individual cases, for the young and the old (*Epist*, *Menoe* 122), and not a generic research.

b) *Human life is sad and painful.*[486] The philosopher states: "All the earth is immersed in suffering". Therefore, philosophy must console, illuminate, and liberate man from life's four evils: fear of the gods, fear of death, fear of iminent evils, and fear that good is difficult to reach. Therefore, philosophy is a fourfold medicine.

c) *The intellect has an instrumental value*, and knowledge is not essential to happiness. The speculative ideal is a foolish "phronesis". The theory of the ideas is the "vain chatter" of the "fatuous" Plato (*Ad Menoe.*, 126). Regarding the difficulty of knowing contingent facts, Epicurus refers to the theory of "multiple explanations", insofar as it is impossible to know the concatenation of phenomena in a "ontology of chance" based on Democritus' atomism. With certainty out of reach, belief or "pistis" enters, which would be a kind of sacred malady (*Ad Herodotum*). Hence science and belief are plausible explanations of reality (*Ad Pythoclem*, Diogenes Laërtius X, 86).

d) *Philosophy is not exoteric*, the privilege of few, but it is salvation for all, including women. Among these women have remained famous Leontine or Leontius and Themistia.

3. *Epicurean Physics*

Epicurean philosophy moves along the lines drawn by Xenocrates, and is divided into physics, logic and morals. Epicurean physics attempts to liberate man from fear of gods and fear of death. Therefore, it does not investigate the universal laws of the cosmos, but employs reasoned observation. Hence it could better be termed "physiology". Thereupon, his thought in this area has nothing to do with metaphysics or physics in the modern sense because Epicurus scorned research on matter and its laws. In its proper sense, "physics" establishes connections between natural phenomena and man. Examples would be human superstitions regarding sounds, lightnings, earthquakes, conjunction of the stars, comets, meteors, etc. Epicurus observes that if man were not afraid of these phenomena, then his "physiology" would be useless (*Capital Sentences* XI, XII, XIII).

Nature is simple because its fundamental law is that "nothing comes from non-being" (Diogenes Laërtius X, 38–39), and "nothing can return to nothingness". It follows that the universe is eternal, indestructible and made up of atoms and movement. It is constructed of an infinite world gifted with limited figures – round, oval, square, etc. – and they are subject to partial palingenesis. This world is made up of extended atoms, movement and figure. Colours, sounds and the qualities in general are real, but they are not perceptible because they are constantly changing (*Ad Herodotum*, 54).[487]

It is an illusion that there are continuous bodies in the world, just as it is an illusion (due to distance) that a flock of sheep is compact and immobile. Everything is made up of atoms grouped in various ways according to a perpendicular and whirling fall into empty space. Human will, the one exception in this world constructed on Democritus' ideals, has the capacity to deviate the movement of atoms and to incline them ("paránklisis", "clinamen" for Lucretius). There are many explanations for other phenomena (as we said just above), because of the presence of chance. Only one thing is important, that one not take refuge in myths (*Ad Pythoclem*, *104*).

The scientific conception of the universe eliminates every superstitious fear. The gods themselves, who are as infinite as the worlds (in opposition to Aristotle) are anthropomorphic beings. They eat, see, sense and speak like men. They are "gods on pension",[488] living in the empty spaces between worlds, or the "intermundia".

It is certainly worthy to offer sacrifices to the gods; not as devotion, but for the joy that religiosity produces in the mind. In fact, the gods do not listen to us, and they cannot hear our prayers; they are "implacable" ("aleitoúrgetoi"). Therefore, the Epicurean will participate in religious feasts, he will erect statues to the gods; and he will offer the sacred sacrifices, but without any expiatory or deprecatory intent.[489] It is better to recognise that one is in the hands of fate than to abandon oneself to a religion made up of vain hopes (*Ad Menoe.*, 134) or stupid divinations. Religion, if it has a sense, serves man and has a subjective and humanistic character.

Man's lot is no better. There is no anguish about the soul-body problem. The soul is the most noble body among all the other parts, and it is diffused in the "remainder" ("tò loipón", *Ad Herodotum*, 63) of the organism. It is not a simple body, but the result of atoms of air, fire and breath (or vapor) which are very round and smooth. It is stupid to think that the soul is incorporeal; only a vacuum is incorporeal, so if the soul were spiritual, then it would be the inert portion, a vacuum, not a principle of energy. Moreover, the soul is mortal.[490]

Man and the other organic living bodies are fortuitous aggregates of atoms. Their cohesion ("synkrisis") or unity is a pure event ("symptoma", *Ad Herodotium* 70 ff.). Before their cohesion or aggregation, they could have been found to be gathered in another way. A pile of rocks can become a house, and a house can become a pile of rocks; this is evident. But then we need not fear death. "When we exist," Epicurus says, "death is not; and when death is, then we no longer exist" (*Ad Menoe.*, 124). All fear of death is unreasonable. In fact, death has three aspects: as life, as death, and as being dead. In the first case, the philosopher must meditate death not as existent ("tò anaìstheton ho thánatos"); in the second case, death is not behind life, but with us. Therefore, the greatest philosophy is to familiarise oneself with death, not as the Platonic "meléte thanàtou", but as a meditation on life to enjoy present life. In the third case, death is nothing, as fainting shows.

4. *The Epicurean "Canonic"*

After physics, Epicurus discusses the part of his philosophy which he calls more canonic than logic. This part of his philosophical culture did not descend further than an interest in the structure of thought. It is interesting to note that he only read

Aristotle's *Analytics* or *Physics* in old age, around 280–279. He decided to read them not to learn, but to criticise the doctrine of the universal and the necessary.[491] "The science of the criterion" (as he calls it) or "of the canon" is only proposed to justify as "evident" the theories he expressed in his physics.[492]

There are two fundamental problems: a) evidence ("enárgeia") as a criterion of certainty; and b) grades of evidence inherent in the various forms of knowledge.

A) *Evidence* is a property of the word, the perception and the thing. This threefold structure is explained with physics. If one first knows the event through intuition and infallibly, then it is designated with the appropriate word. The intuition of evident being does not depend on the duration and hence can be brief or long. It is a capture of the flux of continuous images ("eídola") coming from the thing, as takes place in a cinema. These perceptions are like nuclei of atoms whirling in air, or membranes of objects and their copies. Therefore, evidence is based on the atomism of reality, on the sensism of intuition, and on the nominalism of the word. Epicurus is the first teacher of materialistic positivism.

B) *There are three forms of knowledge*: intuition or perception (discussed above), anticipation (or "prolexis"), and opinion ("doxa"). Given the fact that Epicurus does not recognise the distinction between sensible and intellective knowledge, anticipation is merely the repeated perception which produces images, which are preserved in the memory as stable imprints of objects. With these images we can "precedingly" (or "by anticipation") know objects according to truth, even when they are absent. Deception or error is not possible. In the third form of knowledge, called "opinion" or "supposition" ("hypólepsis"), the mind seeks the reason for the "anticipation". Opinion is the knowledge of what is concealed or in the future. Its gnoseological value depends on verification: the process from the known to the unknown through analogy (induction in the positivistic sense), and the arrival of the event. For example, I know that when the wind blows in from the ocean, then rain will soon follow. It is obvious that this gnoseology has precious little in common with the classical doctrines of Plato and Aristotle, and everything is reduced to a puerile psychological analysis.

5. *Epicurean Ethics*

Epicurean ethics attempts to demonstrate the truth of the fourth medicine: the possibility of reaching happiness. Its fundamental principle is: "pleasure is the principle and the end of a happy life" ("hedoné archè kaì télos toû makaríos zên" – *Ad Menoe.*, 128). In pleasure (which is not only sensual, but also joy of the heart) Epicurus distinguishes the subject, the act and the means.

The subject of pleasure is the body and the soul. Pleasure of the body presupposes health ("aponía", "hygíeia"), which, being variable, makes pleasure transitory and relative from person to person and from age to age. The pleasure of the soul is superior, and presupposes "imperturbability" ("ataraxía"), which is the use of intimate reflection and a joy of the spirit. However, the pleasure of music, of painting, etc., find their resolution in the stomach, because in both spiritual and corporeal pleasures, it is always the body which furnishes the stimulus.[493]

The act of pleasure can belong to two species: there is a kinetic or violent pleasure, and a placid and katastematic pleasure. Both can take place in the body or in the soul. According to C. Diano's interpretation, it would be possible to simultaneously experience both kinetic and placid pleasure; for example, when a hungry man eats an apple. The stomach rejoices because the pain of hunger has ceased, and the palate rejoices because it enjoys the taste of the fruit. However, Philip Merlan negates this interpretation because the root of pleasure can only be the organism.

Regarding placid pleasure, the Epicureans and Cyrenaics believed that true pleasure is only kinetic. In short, a pleasure during the pause exists, which would not consist of being satiated, but in a sensuality "sui generis" whose source is not external stimulus, but the body itself. For example, it is pleasure to drink delicious wine from a chalice; but it is also a pleasure to give up drinking. This pleasure can be perfect and contain an infinite happiness, outside of time; it is an instantaneous eternity which does not require that man desire immortality.

The means of pleasure are the practice of the four virtues: *prudence* ("phronesis"), which is a calculation ("symmétresis") of pleasures which may be natural – necessary (eating and drinking); natural – non-necessary (drinking exquisite wines), and non- natural – non-necessary (crowns on the head, honorifics, perfumes, etc. – *Capital Sentences* XXX). *Temperance* and *fortitude* are instruments of pleasure because they temper the desires and lead to constancy. If they did not bring pleasure, then they would be true evils (*Capital Sentences*, Chapter V).

Friendship is the fourth ethical virtue. It is the only social virtue which leads the individual to escape the clamour of the crowds, the passions of politics and the tumult of business in order to enjoy a communion of goods with friends ("láthe biôsas"). Epicurus negates the value of justice as a virtue, because cohabiting in the name of giving and having reduces itself to a utilitarian fact, which is also shared by animals and consists of not harming oneself (*Capital Sentences*, Chapter XXXV). Its contrary, injustice, is not an evil in itself. Evil, if it exists, is a fear of pain. It is only because of this fear that one avoids doing damage to others.

This utilitarian concept is also applied to civil norms. A law with no usefulness has no sense, and its legitimacy begins not with its promulgation, but from the moment when individuals begin to make use of it. Therefore, politics contaminate men, and the philosopher has no need for the protection of potentates. Diogenes of Oenoanda considers rhetoric and the militia contemptible, because they are at the service of politics.[494]

6. *Conclusion on Epicureanism*

Among the grave accusations and insults collected in his biography of Epicurus, we also read this expression, uttered by a certain Timon: "Last of the physicians, the biggest swine and dog, from Samos, a schoolmaster, the most ignorant of all the living". We can see why these defamations have given rise to fiery reactions, which led many authors to rehabilitate him and his doctrine. Among these authors we find Bertrand Russell, who accuses Diogenes Laërtius of having implacably gathered the most slanderous things written by the Stoics, who were Epicureans' worst enemies.[495]

To arrive at the truth, we may begin with a preliminary observation that Epicurus does recommend a certain wary and timorous control over the passions, not for moral perfection, but for the possession of an interior serenity which was the romantic aspiration of a class of people in fourth-century Greece. His doctrine was not a "philosophy", but a counsel; and it was imposed in the form of a dogmatic message for limited groups seeking consolation and intimacy (we would say) of a bourgeois kind. It should not be surprising that Epicureanism, since it was reserved for suspect environments, attracted well-founded accusations from all directions. It was not only the Stoics, but all the schools, who attacked Epicureanism. Nor does it suffice to accuse Diogenes Laërtius of partisanship, since this biographer, as we have seen, is not generous to any philosopher when it comes to scandalous stories and defamatory narrations.

Epicureanism, which some authors have called "existentialism 'ante litteram'", could find success only in a worn-out and tired Greece. The Epicureans attempted to penetrate Rome, but they were evicted in the second century B.C. for spreading licentiousness among the young.

Around 50 B.C., a certain Amaphinus wrote a treatise on Epicurean philosophy in Latin. At that point, the attempt to introduce Epicureanism to Rome had some slight success. Only a few refined persons followed its teachings: Virgil (up to a certain point), Lucretius, Velleius of Lanuvius, Atticus (Cicero's friend), and the empress Plotina (Trajan's wife) in the second century

A.D.[496] Even Horatius jokes when mentioning his more pleasure-loving years that he was "a pig in Epicurus' herd". But Seneca, although he recognised some truths in the doctrine, rejected it in favour of Stoicism, saying that it was like preferring a man to a woman (*Ad Lucilium*, epist. 108).

Therefore, the Epicureans were a sect, so much so that in the second century A.D. they were made equal to the Christians. Lucian of Samosata mentions that the Epicureans and Christians joined together to defend themselves against the aggressions of paganism. He mentions a charlatan, some Alexander, who passed himself off as as prophet of Esculapius, against whom both Epicureans and Christians rose up:

> He [Alexander] again established some mysteries with processions and candlelight, and other ceremonies lasting three days. On the first day he made a declaration, as in Athens, with these words: if an Atheist, a Christian, or an Epicurean approaches our mysteries, he will run away; the believers in our god celebrate these mysteries with good fortune. Then the procession began. He went forward and said: out with the Christians! And the multitude responded: out with the Epicureans . . . (Alexander, 38).

This apparent identification is significant. The alliance of the two groups is not explained by their common moral level, nor with religious reasons, but for opposite motives. The Epicureans were opposed to any form of religiosity or superstition, while the Christians were enemies of paganism. This was a temporary alliance born of necessity. This is confirmed by Diogenes Laërtius; and, once the Christians gained their freedom, they burned the Epicurean writings (as Julian the apostate attests).[497] In the fourth century it all ended ingloriously, and it was only in the nineteenth century that Bentham and his followers (like the French "philosophes" of the eighteenth century) exhumed the ancient glory of Epicurus.

CHAPTER THREE

STOICISM

1. *Introductory Notes*

Stoicism was chronologically the second Hellenistic school to be founded in Athens, after Epicureanism. Its founder, Zeno of Citium (Cyprus), opened the school around 300 B.C. at the painted portico (in Greek, "Stoá poikíle"), or Poecile, which was an art gallery decorated by Polignotus near the market. However, this school's importance far surpassed that of Epicureanism. Therefore, it is with good reason that Max Pohlenz entitled his great work *Die Stoa, Geschichte einer geistliche Bewegung* (2 volumes, Gottingen 1948–1949 – translated into Italian under the title *The Stoa, The History of a Spiritual Movement*, Florence 1967). This was a great current of thought which influenced the Hebrew Philo. Even after the advent of Christianity it continued to figure in the thought of the Church Fathers[498] such as Tertullian, Saint Ambrose, and later Martin of Braga (sixth century), who was inspired by Seneca. From this point of view, Stoicism is not only a school, but a movement comparable to Platonism or Aristotelism.

Zeno, who was a Semite on his mother's side, read Socratic writings in his homeland which his father, a businessman, purchased when he travelled to Athens. At the age of 22 he chose to travel to Athens where he learned Greek excellently in order to attend the lessons of the most famous masters, such as Polemon

(Xenocrates' successor at the Academy), Stilpo the Megarian, and above all Crates the Cynic.[499] At thirty-three years of age he felt himself to be a teacher; but because he was not rich, he held his lessons in a public place, the painted portico. Although he was a foreigner, he was immediately accepted by Athenians, who liked his modesty, reserve and religiosity. He was tall, dark-skinned and delicate; and he knew how to discipline himself and live a long life. He directed his school for 38 years. His death is curious: already elderly, one day while walking along a road he tripped and fell badly, wounding himself gravely. Distressed, he turned to the ground and said, "Here I am; why do you call me?" And he immediately committed suicide by strangulation. This is an example which all the most austere and coherent Stoics imitated.

He wrote many works, among them the *Republic* (written, as was jokingly said, on the "tail of the dog", Crates), *Greek Discipline*, *Living According to Nature*, *The Whole*, *The Signs*, *Homeric Problems*, etc. Very little has remained of all these works (as likewise of the works of all the ancient Stoics). Hans von Arnim deserves credit for having collected the fragments of this school in three volumes, in a work entitled *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta* (Teubner editions, Lipsia – Berlin 1905–1923).

Zeno had many disciples: Herillus of Carthage, Perseus of Citium, Ariston of Chios, and his successor Cleanthes (304–222), a Herculean figure, tireless worker, with an iron will, who was admired more for his Cynical customs than for his doctrine. He also ended his life by his own hand. At this point the school broke apart. Three disciples of Zeno – Perseus, Philonides, and Aratus of Soli left Athens and took Stoicism to the Macedonian court of Pella, while preserving the original, practical and cynical character of the founder. The gospel of this school were Xenophon's *Memorabilia*. The events surrounding the Macedonian school are not well-known. What we know is that after the battle of Pidna in 168, the Stoic library was taken to Rome by Aemilius Paulus as war booty and placed at the disposition of a group of Roman youth. This was the famous club of Scipion Aemilianus, which included

Polybius, the philosopher Panaetius, Pacuvius and other.[500] This was a decisive factor for Roman culture and philosophy, as we will discuss later.

Chrysippus of Soli (or Tarsus) (321–205) remained in Athens, and he can be considered the founder of theoretical Stoicism. At the age of 56 he took leadership from Cleanthes, and he wrote 705 works which show his open-minded, polemical character and his productive pen. He set himself to writing 500 lines a day, and was constantly reviewing, correcting and improving his earlier writings. However, his extensive material probably was full of quotes pilfered from various sources. Diogenes Laërtius, at the end of his brief biography of Chrysippus, gives 167 titles of works, which were divided into logical and ethical categories. For all these reasons, Diogenes Laërtius is right indeed when he states that "without Chrysippus, the Stoa would have never existed" – VII, 8).

His successors[501] were Zeno of Tarsus, Diogenes of Babylonia, Antipater of Tarsus, Apollodorus of Seleucia, Archidemus of Tarsus, Boethus of Sidon, Basilides, Eudromus and Crinides. The latter three cannot be assigned certain historical dates, and of the others (as Pohlenz observes) we have uncertain data (volume I, p. 501). After about 100 B.C., with its destruction at the hands of Silla, Athens lost much of its prestige and cultural institutions.[502] At that time, a new philosophy was born in Rome, which brought an end to the ancient Stoa of Chrysippus and his successors and which will return to some of the subjects of Zeno's purer Stoicism. This we can ascertain from the library of Macedonia and from the Latin genius shown in Roman Philosophy.

2. *General Character of Ancient Stoic Philosophy*

Although (as we will see) Stoicism shared the Epicureans' materialism, it distinguished itself in three doctrinal lines: a) *a Cynical orientation*, which can be seen in the precept "abstine, sustine". This ethics of moral effort, which was in direct opposition to the Epicureans' facile hedonism, was gradually refined and humanised with the adoption of "duty", or seriousness of life and social responsibilities ("kathêkon"). It was this human dimension which led Roman philosophers to the discovery of "humanitas", the sense of decorum, and natural law; b) *a Heraclitean orientation*, which led the Stoics to a pantheistic vision of the world, in which the old "logos" has not only the function of immanently guiding cosmic events, but is also the insuperable law of eternal return of things through conflagration ("expyrosis"); c) *an Aristotelian orientation* in theodicy, above all in the concept of "providence" as elaborated by Theophrastus.[503] In logic, the Stoics developed some new elements in the areas of semantics and grammar. The concept of matter and form was also appropriated but was transformed into the theory of mass and energy, which provoked the degradation of metaphysics into physics. However, logic, theodicy and physics are subordinate to ethics, according to the canons of all the Hellenistic schools; d) they openly professed materialism, which complicated the complex logical and physical theories of their system.

3. *The Physics of the Ancient Stoa*

Physics was understood by Zeno and Chrysippus as an essential part of philosophy. To show this they used the example of an egg: the shell is logic, the white is ethics, and the yolk is the end. Or, as others said (Diogenes Laërtius VII, 40): logic is the hedge, ethics is the tree, and the end is the soil. Cleanthes increased the three disciplines to six, but in reality he merely divided each of the individual parts: dialectics-rhetoric, ethics-politics, and physics-theology.

Stoic physics included mathematics, astronomy, biology and theology. The universe is heaven and earth, extension and movement, life and death. From this point of view, the universe is only one, and hence infinite worlds do not exist (anti-Epicurean polemics). It has existed from infinity and is blessed. Cleanthes introduced "conflagration", stating that the world renews itself cyclically by purifying itself in fire (Heraclitus) and by restoring things to their original condition for the start of a new eon.

How can we explain this theological pantheism? The Stoics took the "logos" from Heraclitus as the unifying, efficient and immanent divine principle in matter. It is not the transcendent "Noûs" discussed by Aristotle, but the active principle ("tò poiôun") internal to the matter. In fact, the ancient Stoics taught that everything is body, but that the body (including the universe) possesses a passive principle (matter – "tò páschon"), and an active principle, which is a force or energy inherent to the body's matter. Therefore, matter is not viewed in an Aristotelian way, as a metaphysical principle, but as mass. The active principle does not correspond to Aristotle's form, because it does not possess "télos", but an energy of qualified mechanical force in the guise of a efficient "lógos". Hence energy takes on grades of bodies' unification in the hierarchy of beings; it is the simple principle of cohesion in the inorganic beings ("héxis"), the vital principle or "nature" of plants ("physis"), the "soul" or vital principle in animals ("psyché"), and the "lógos" in man.

One of the most obscure parts of Stoic physics is the following: how does the active principle, the body, pervade the mass? They always believed that the mass is penetrable by the energy-body in the guise of air and vapour, called "pneûma". The "pneûma" permeates and forms everything ("demiourgêi"), and without it matter would be a "non-qualified substance" ("ápoios ousía"). However, once the "pneûma" enlivens the mass (beginning with the four elements, water-air-earth-fire), then the hierarchical scale of the existents is created: inorganic, plants, animals and man.

There is also a question of how, from the inferior grades of existence, the "lógos" could produce superior grades: plants from soil, animals from plants, etc. The Stoics distinguished a *present* "lógos" or "pneûma", through which a thing finds itself in its effective grade, and a latent "lógos" called "*germinal*" ("lógos spermatikós"), which with its energy provokes an ascent in grade.

This is the "koinós" "lógos" (common principle) or "author's fire" (from Heraclitus), which is omnipresent and omnipotent. St. Augustine used this concept to explain creation in a Christian and evolutionary sense; God placed in original matter an energy capable of performing the leap of quality toward more perfect forms of existence and life.

Also connected to this physical theory is so-called Stoic theology, which is a constituent part of their physics. Theirs is a fatalistic and explicit pantheism. God for the Stoics is but the "pneûma" spread throughout all things. It is given different names – God, Mind, Providence, Fate, Nature or Jupiter. It is called God in that the immanent principle is divine and survives all the conflagrations in the form of an eternal fire. It is called Mind in that its being and action are rational; nothing escapes or is exempt from its work of infallible direction. Therefore, the Stoics, more than all Greek philosophers, exalted "Providence" ("prónoia"), which is the rigorously unified sequence of change. In this area, Stoicism finds itself at the throat of Democritean and Epicurean philosophy, which made chance a law of the universe. Therefore, it is called Fate ("heimarméne"), or rationality which predetermines everything ("anánke") without room for freedom. Hence everything is preordained according to an infallible design. Fortune, chance, misfortune, disgrace and misadventure are words which the Stoics all reduce to one term: destiny or fate.

It is called Nature, because the body of God is the cosmic matter or nature. The superior heaven and the inferior world are the substance of God (Von Arnim I, 163) in which God is immersed as intelligent fire ("technikós", fragment 171). It is called Jupiter to express the identity between religion and philosophy. The Stoics did not deny polytheism when faced with the divine indestructible fire or Jupiter, but they stated that the inferior gods had to be considered corporeal beings destined to endure for a certain time, but not forever. The souls of the heroes were assigned an even shorter existence.

Within this vision of a perfect and divine world which is rigidly finalised, there is no place for anything evil, contingent or fortuitous. Hence the Stoics' difficulty in placing man within the great fatalistic stage of the universe. Man is made up of body and soul. The body is made up of various compositions of the four elements, organised by the "lógos" according to a diversified structure of organs and functions. The soul is the "lógos" or "pneûma", since this is a fine body having the capacity to penetrate and permeate the organism in all its parts. The Stoics divide the soul into eight parts, of which the sovereign part is called "hegemonic", or the reason which presides over the senses, the use of words, and generation. After death, the soul survives only for a certain time: those of the heroes live at length, and those of common men live for a limited time. Those of wicked men dissolve quickly. Therefore, the soul is not immortal, and its destiny is to be resolved in the universal "lógos". The problem of freedom arises in all its drama: how can man escape fate? Chrysippus distinguishes external causes from internal causes and stated that human freedom does not externally escape the inviolable chain of fate, but that internally the will preserves its prerogative of free choice. Cicero left us with an ingenious attempt where the Stoics sought (in vain) to explain this freedom. A cylinder which glides over an inclined plane is not free to descend, but the rolling of the cylinder is all its own (Von Arnim, volume II, fragment 974). Hippolytus of Rome refers to the example of a carriage pulled by a dog. The carriage moves with the wheels, not with the legs; this is its freedom, even if it is forced to move by the dog's traction (Von Arnim II, fragment 975).

Nevertheless, man rests at the centre of Stoic speculation. The world was produced for man; animals, plants and heaven serve for his glory. But only the Fire, after the cosmic year, will not die; it will restore ("apokatástasis") things every 12,945 years to their original state, after having reduced everything to combustion. This is found in Cleanthes' famous hymn to Jupiter, a hymn which had the honour of being quoted by Saint Paul (Acts 17: 18) in his discourse to the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers in Athens:

O God most glorious, called by man a name,
Nature's great King, through endless years the same;
Omnipotence, who by thy just decree
Controllest all, hail, Zeus, for unto thee
Behoves thy creatures in all lands to call.
We are thy children, we alone, of all
On earth's broad ways that wander to an fro,
Bearing thy image wheresoe'er we go
[...]
Zeus the all-beautiful, whom darkness shrouds,
Whose lightning lightens in the thunder clouds;
Thy children save from error's deadly sway:
Turn thou the darkness from their souls away;
Vouchsafe that unto knowledge they attain;
For thou by knowledge art made strong to reign
O'er all, and all things rulest righteously.
So by thee honoured, we will honour thee,
Praising thy works continuously with songs,
As mortals should.

4. *Logic of the Ancient Stoa*

The term "logic" is properly Stoic and indicates the science of oral and mental discourse. It may be studied in relation with physics and ethics, in which case we gather its *functional aspect*. This aspect occupies itself with the truth and evidence of the conclusions reached in the other two parts of philosophy. We can also study its *internal*, *autonomous structure*, in which case we find its two scientific stages: as *logic* and as *rhetoric*.

A) *Logic in its functional moment* is an apologetic tool with which one defends philosophical truths in the physical and ethical fields through the concept of "evidence" (a concept already used by the Epicureans). The criterion of evidence or truth cannot be offered by simple sensation, which is only the basis for knowledge. We need a guarantee of certainty which goes beyond sensory impressions, a tendency we have in common with other animals. Sensation produces an imprint (as a seal produces in wax) or (as Chrysippus said) a qualitative alteration in animals (Von Arnim II, fragment 56) which rests above the flux of sensations (called "fantasy"). However, this imprint is not enough; a third level is necessary. This is the "lógos", which is our soul and must give its assent. Assent is the "criterion with which the truth of things is recognised" (VII, 49). Hence one has the "comprehensive representation" ("phantasia kataleptiké"), a conscious adhesion through assent with the sensory representation. Truth rests neither in the thing nor in thought by itself, but in the approved assent ("axioûsthai", – VII, 65).

Chrysippus defines truth as the self-sufficient and perfect logical structure which has a sense. However, in this definition truth is defined in relation to an exterior thing.

The Stoics insist on stating that the assent to a thing's representation is free. In reality, it is the object itself which, with its presence, gains the soul's assent and furnishes the guarantee of truth or evidence. Zeno referred to the example of the hand: the hand open with the fingers extended indicates the "fantasy", or the representation produced directly by the material object in the imagination. The hand with curved fingers indicates assent, and the hand closed in the shape of a fist indicates "comprehensive" understanding or representation. When one hand presses the other's fist, then we have science.

Obviously, this functional logic is affected by materialism and an ingenuous objectivism, for two reasons: first, because it is always sensation that makes impressions on the soul and determines the soul's truthful character; and second, because the soul's assent is a material event, given the fact that the soul is a body.

B) Even more complex is the *structural logic*, which includes rhetoric and logic and the strict sense. Rhetoric has no particular importance, because although the Stoics borrow from Aristotle the threefold task of deliberation (the future), demonstrating (the present) and judging (the past), this sphere is reduced to a verbal exercise in which ornate style and oratory precepts rule.

More interesting is their logic which, under the effect of the new semiotic or semantic logic, has attracted the attention of many scholars. Among these researchers are Benson Mates (*Stoic Logic*, Los Angeles 1961), and earlier Jan Lukasiewicz (*Logice Stoikow*, 1927), G. Preti ("Sulla dottrina del 'semeîon' nella logica stoica", in *Rivista di Filosofia*, 1958, pp. 179–227), M. Mignucci (*Il significato della logica stoica*, Bologna 1967), Atilla Faj ("Anticipazioni della logica stoica in Platone", in *Giornale di Metafisica*, XXV, 1970, pp. 675–691). Still, even earlier Karl Prantl (*Geschichte der Logik in Abendland*, 4 volumes, Leipzig, 1885) had shown the way for a deeper examination of Stoic logic.

The sources (scholars agree), although they are not uniform and clear, base logic on three elements: a) the existent, or the real existent body which can produce a sensation ("Tò tynchánon") and a subsequent impression or representation; b) the spoken sound, or the word, which is the sign of the thing ("phoné"); c) the meaning attached to the word with which one designates the existent thing ("tò semainómenon"). As we can see, the Eleatic triad and the Platonic-Aristotelian being-thought-word is substituted with another triad: thing, word and meaning. This is a profoundly different view possessed by the two philosophies when faced with the gnoseological and metaphysical problems.

The Thing: For the Stoics, the reality or founding element of logic are existent bodies ("prágmata"); and hence these philosophers (in the wake of Aristotle) outline some categories, such as substance, quality, the "state of being" ("tò pôs échein") and relation. However, we should immediately observe that the object where knowledge terminates is not the Aristotelian "eînai" because this would imply bodies' ontological consistency, which they did not admit. Therefore, the Stoics indicated the "tò tì" (the "something") as the foundation of both ontology and logic, insofar as the object of knowledge is not being, but the event or the accidents.[504] The Stoic disdain for metaphysics derives from this, in their rejection of a discourse on the foundation of reality, and the gradual shifting of philosophy from physics to ethical-religious interests. Hence we also see a form of emotional intuition regarding moral values.[505]

The Word: The word, as a phonetic event, is isolated both from the thing and from the meaning. Hence we obtain the "theory of the word" (VII, 62), or phonetics, as an analysis of language in its various grammatical expressions. Indeed, words can be complete or incomplete. *If they are incomplete*, then phonetics studies their inflexions ("Kategorémata"): for example, for the verbs "audio", "audior" and "audires", or the supine or oblique inflections such as "diei" and "diem". *If they are complete*, then phonetics examines their forms. This form is *judgement* ("axíoma"), which can be *simple* (for example, "it is daytime"), *negative* ("nullus ambulat"), *indefinite* ("aliquis ambulat"), *connected* ("si dies est, lux est"), *adjunctive* ("quoniam dies est, lux est", *conjunctive* ("et dies est et lux est"), *disjunctive* ("aut dies est aut lux est"), *causal* ("quia lux est, dies est"), or *declarative* ("potius dies est quam non est"). All the inflections or complex enunciations can be true or false, probable, possible or impossible, necessary or non-necessary, likely or unlikely.

The third and highest level of this study of the complex word is reasoning ("lógos"), which has three parts: lemma ("lêmma"), assumption ("prólepsis") and conclusion.

The Meaning: The meaning, which is connected with the word, is called "lógos", because it is the work neither of the thing, nor of the word, but possesses an autonomy making it a concept, an evident representation, but an incorporeal reality. It takes on various functions: a) insofar as it is applied to many objects, it is a universal attribute or notion ("koinai énnoiai"); b) insofar as it depends on sensation, it always requires contact ("períptosis") with things, and hence *possesses evidence* ("enárgeia"); c) insofar as it can represent absent or future objects, it is their *cognitive anticipation* ("prólepsis"). Sometimes the "prólepsis" is implanted ("émphytoi") in human nature, and in this fashion some notions are innate; d) insofar as the meaning is a mental content separable from the thing and from the word, it is incorporeal, and properly in this case is called "expressible" ("tò lektòn").

To review this brief exposition of Stoic logic, we must qualify it as materialistic and phenomenalistic regarding the thing, nominalistic regarding the word, and conceptualistic regarding the meaning. To say that the Stoics were precursors of modern symbolic logic may be true; but all historians agree in admitting two things. First, Stoic logic implies serious difficulties and incoherencies with their system; for example, the theory of the meaning as incorporeal, which contradicts their basic affirmation of materialism. Second, the sources are not always clear and in agreement. Hence we can see the difficulty in outlining the coherent Stoic system, and hence the justified hesitation of some semantic philosophers to consider the Stoics the first precursors of mathematical logic or semantics.

5. *Ethics of the Ancient Stoa*

Stoic ethics presents original characteristics distinguishing it from its Platonic (ethics of the gift), Aristotelian (ethics of the just middle way) and Epicurean (founded on pleasure) counterparts. The Stoics formulate their own system, basing it on their anthropology of the "lógos", the qualified presence of the divine in man. To discover the "lógos" means to discover a moral order to which man must submit. Hence the youth is guided by the auroral impulse ("hormé") to preserve his own being. It is at about the age of 14 that this discovery reaches its fullness. I quote a fundamental text of Chrysippus in review form, which was proposed by Diogenes Laërtius and states: "The Stoics state that the first inclination ("hormé") of the animal is its own defence for its preservation, since this is the property innate in nature from the beginning of existence, as Chrysippus states in his first book, *De finibus*. He declares that it is a fundamental property of every animal to persevere in being ["systasis"] and have the consciousness ["syneídesis"] of their unified consistency. This is intimate to the animal's vital and biological structure. Therefore, the Epicureans are false when they state that animals' first inclination is pleasure. The Stoics state that pleasure (if it really exists in the animal) appears later, when the individual nature achieves all the necessary requirements for its own preservation ["systasis"] . . . This law, which is common to the trees and the animals, is manifested in man in the most perfect way, as an 'author of inclination' ["technites tês hormês"], according to the 'lógos' (J. Von Arnim III, 178; Diogenes Laërtius VII, 85–87).

This is a significant text which allows us to establish the foundation of Stoic morals. Moral life is a discovery and appropriation ("oikéiosis") of living according to the "lógos", according to the imperative "homologouménos zên teî physei", "to live in conformity with nature". This is manifested in man as "lógos", or the moral norm. This imperative is easily arrived at because it is human structure ("systasis") that manifests a primary will regarding life. Therefore, the Stoics state that life's law is pleasurable but that pleasure is secondary. It should also be observed that the execution of natural law is free. As Rosmini had already observed (*La società e il suo fine*, Milan 1839), the Stoics, alone among ancient thinkers, distinguished the will of nature and the will of the person. As Epictetus later stated, an actual personal freedom and a habitual freedom do exist. He who does evil is free to do so (personal freedom), but he is not totally free in doing so and in having done so. In the virtuous man, the two freedoms correspond.

From this foundation we can trace the four specific concepts of Stoic ethics; duty, virtue, good and happiness.

Duty ("to kathêkon") is the moral obligation that the human subject perceives within himself as it conforms with nature. Max Pohlenz advances a suggestive hypothesis that Zeno probably borrowed the concept of duty (completely extraneous to other Hellenistic philosophies) from the Jewish religion, and he was inspired by the divine "commandments".[506] Duty is not the perfection of the moral act; "*right intention*" (called "kathórtoma") is also necessary (the Scholastics' "intentio"), which is an ethical fullness flowing from possessed virtue. Therefore, if all men must obey the moral norm ("kathêkon"), still only the virtuous are moved by an intention so right that it transfigures the "kathêkon" into a "kathórtoma".

Virtue, according to the Stoics, cannot be defined (as Aristotle did) only as "habitus" ("héxis"), or a fragile possession of good. Virtue is a "disposition" ("diáthesis"), or the stable and rigid possession of the will for good. Hence, once this is acquired, it cannot be lost. Cleanthes contradicts himself when he states that virtue can fade away with melancholy or drunkenness. The Stoics debated the primacy and division of the virtues, but they all state that perfect virtue suffices for *happiness*, Of all the different *goods*, which can be *preferable* (life, health, strength, beauty, etc.) or *not preferable* (poverty, weakness, dishonour, etc.), the Stoics also distinguish the *external* ones (riches, health, beauty and their existence), which are *indifferent to the wise man*, Hence their inclination to Cynicism, their indifference to life and their tendency to suicide, which is called in some texts "éulogos eisagogé", a reasonable departure.

This indifference ("autarchia") toward indifferent goods becomes an "apathia" when faced with the passions. The passions (contrary to Aristotle) are considered moral maladies: pain, fear, desires and pleasures are wicked, and the wise Stoic avoids them constantly. Autarchy and apathy lead the Stoic to realise the Cynical precept, "abtine sustine". To abstain and to sustain create "ataraxia", an imperturbability which is a form of interior freedom without a dominion over what is ruled by fate. To accept fate ("amor fati") is a form of non-free freedom: "Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt" (Seneca, ep. 107), and hence the wise man "praebet se fato" (*Ibid.*, 96).

The Stoics also confronted the problem of sin ("hamártema"), and they studied its gravity (VII, 120). They inculcated prayer as supplication (VII, 123), divination as research of divine will, and above all they exalted the value of culture, social life, the progress of friendship (defined as a divine gift – "theópompos") (VII, 130). Politics would deserve a separate chapter; it suffices here to note that the Stoics defined man as a "communitary animal" (koinonikós"). However, a further development of this dimension will take place later, during the imperial period.

CHAPTER FOUR

SCEPTICISM

1. *Introductory Notes*

We have noted how the Middle and New Academies took on a Sceptical attitude, appropriating the categories of the "reasonable" and the "probable". This indicates a diffident attitude toward certain proposals of the Stoics and Epicureans. However, true Scepticism, or "Pyrrhonism" (from its founder, Pyrrho of Elis, 365–270 B.C.) took up the task of re-examining common convictions regarding the problem of truth and even of the way of living. As a young man, Pyrrho frequented the Megarian school, and from this school he probably acquired a certain Socratic inclination. Later he became acquainted with Anaxarch of Abdera, who was his companion and fellow soldier during the Macedonian army's march into India. This contact with India seems to have also influenced Pyrrho's spirit; his conduct leads us to believe that he became acquainted with the fakhirs.[507] After returning home to Elis, he opened a philosophical school around 320; but this school gained little popularity at first, mostly because of his teaching style. Like Socrates, he did not see fit to write any works. He lived in a very reserved, religious fashion; and he was elected a priest in his homeland. Diogenes Laërtius describes him as an extravagantly saintly man:

> He let everything do as it wished and took no precautions, but was indifferent toward every danger he encountered, be

they chariots or precipices or dogs. He conceded absolutely nothing to the whim of the senses (Diogenes Laërtius IX, 61). When Anaxarch once fell into a quagmire, Pyrrho continued on his way without helping him (*Ibid.*, 63).

He was admired by Epicurus for his style of living; and among his disciples were Nausiphanes, Epicurus' and Timon's teacher (it was Timon who collected his doctrines). For his attitude of rejection of certainties, the Pyrrhonists were called "suspensive" ("ephektikói", from "epoché"), "inquisitive" ("zetetikói"), subitative, and above all "sceptics". This (as Diogenes Laërtius explains) was due to the fact that "it is necessary to always investigate ["sképtesthai] and never find" (IX, 70), in contrast to those who support philosophical "dogmas" (*Ibid.*, 74).

The school continued to exist, with mixed fortune, until the second century A.D. Its major figures were Oenesidemus, who wrote an *Introductory Sketch of Pyrrho's Philosophy* in the times of Cicero (first century B.C.); Agrippa, who lived in the first and second centuries A.D. and is famous for his "tropes", or arguments in favour of Scepticism; and Sextus Empiricus, who apparently taught in Alexandria in the second and third centuries A.D. and wrote *Pyrrhonian Sketches* and *Against the Dogmatics*.[508]

However, the doctrinal distance between the founder and his later followers is great. The founder underwent the influence of Indian renunciation and Megarian – Democritean dialectics. In the perspective of Indian renunciation, his philosophy seems more an "art of life" than a doctrine. In his Greek dialectics, Pyrrho enjoyed the game of dialogue. Diogenes Laërtius states: " . . . he allowed no one to gain the upper hand over him in a philosophical discussion, because his discourse always developed in a continuous way and regarded the question posed" (IX, 64). Therefore, it seems plausible to say that in Pyrrho "life" prevailed over dialectics and that he accepted life as a value in itself, without the support of truth or of determined values. Regarding practical truths, it seems that he accepted them as incontrovertible tl

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Oenesidemus gathered in a fragmentary and empirical way ten reasons for the suspension of assent, which are based on the contradictory nature of reality. They are: 1) the difference of pleasures and pains or tastes between animals and men; 2) different sensations produced by the same object; 3) different mperaments or idiosyncrasies; 4) the variety of humours among

5) the difference in institutions, laws and religions;

of colour and chemical properties after mixture: in

movement; 7) variation of perception of objects

atmospheric conditions: for example, the sun is

and when it sets; 8) the various effects of

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In this work we see a "pars destruens", where he reviews the "tropoi" of preceding Scepticism. In the "pars construens" he proposes a life without dogmas,without fundamental truths to safeguard, an experience as immediacy and as an exercise of mechanical instinctiveness. In fact, all the Sceptics implicitly accept life, and do not wish to reduce themselves to a "block of wood" (Aristotle). However, Sextus Empiricus gave a consistency to this conception, in four directions:

a) knowledge lacks any metaphysical intentionality. Therefore, all religions admitting any providence of the gods are to be rejected.

b) The natural impulses are directive principles of action, but they do not imply norms, superstructures or intentionality.

c) Acceptance of traditions as a sociological fact.

d) Life, as a profession, does not require any metaphysical or religious orientation. We must not even consider an "art of life" (*Adversus mathematicos* XI, 188).

However, this apparently tranquil solitude and elimination of thought's disturbances is not stable in the Sceptics, but portends a research for more solid certainties. Scepticism is a malady of the spirit.

CHAPTER FIVE

ROMAN PHILOSOPHY

1. *Introduction*

We have already mentioned that the year 86 B.C. was fatal to the philosophy of the Athenian schools. Sillas' destruction made the Scholarch's existence more difficult, and henceforth the most illustrious thinkers chose Rome as their centre. There was another factor attracting philosophers to Rome: the rapid growth of Roman power and the establishment of cultural centres in the capital, be they juridical, philosophical, scientific-military and rhetorical. However, the cultural framework in Rome differed profoundly from its Greek and eastern counterparts. The upper, cultured classes had an open mind regarding Hellenistic values, but they also felt that the imperial state helped develop an atmosphere quite different from eastern effeminacy and Greek servility. Magnanimity, vigour and loyalty were virtues and characteristics of the Roman spirit, which led to a renewal of Hellenistic philosophy in the areas of politics, anthropology and law.[509]

To review briefly the progress of Roman philosophy, we must first outline the events which led to its birth. The first element to be mentioned is the club of the Scipions, where the texts of the primitive Stoa were read and studied until about 180 B.C. A second important event was Panaetius' arrival in Rome from Rhodes (185–109 B.C.); after having frequented the lectures of the Stoics Antipater and Carneades in Athens, he came to Rome around

150 B.C. Here he gained the spirit of the great capital as a guest of the Scipion circle and a friend of Quintus Mutius Seaevola, the famous jurist. In 129 he returned to Athens to teach his philosophy, which he had modified and adapted to the Roman spirit after his contact with the latter's character. From the fragments which have survived (M. Van Straaten, *Panaetii Rhodii fragmenta*, Leyden 1962, third edition), we see that, although he professed Stoicism, he tempered its dogmatism with some elements taken from Plato and Aristotle.[510]

In physics, Panaetius rejected "conflagration" and thus weakened the original Stoic fatalism, better distinguishing the world from God and accenting Providence as the ruler of the world. In anthropology, he left more space to human freedom and widened the distinction between soul and body. Hence he demonstrated a more universal sense of the will's autonomy and the importance of duty ("kathêkon"). This teaching was more accessible to all men, as he left in the shadows the school's aristocratic "kathórtoma". This openness to values led Panaetius to prefer "euthymía", which is courage and joy, over Zeno's original "apátheia". Panaetius' ideal was no longer to "live according to nature" but to "live according to the dispositions given by nature".

These ideas made a profound impression on Marcus Tullius Cicero, who wrote in the *De Officiis* on the footsteps contained in Panaetius' writings.

Another thinker, also a non-Greek, was *Poseidonius of Apamaea* (in Syria) (140–51 B.C.), who can be considered as belonging to the sphere of Roman philosophy. After having studied in Athens at Panaetius' school, he came to Rome in 86 as the ambassador of Rhodes and remained there for some years. It was in Rome that he established contact with the more erudite circles of the city and from Rome that he voyaged west as far as Spain and Marseilles. Finally, he decided to open a philosophical school in Rhodes, which attracted the most illustrious men of his time, especially the Romans Cicero and Pompey (in 62 B.C.).[511] In physics, he distinguished God from nature and fate in such a way that God was identified with the spherical and eternal form of the world. Hence God was considered as heaven, as an active principle of the world.

In opposition to Chrysippus' original Stoicism, he admitted a "force" in the soul, which is the source of the passions. He re-evaluated intermediate "goods", such as the value of health, bodily vigour, robustness, etc. Therefore, he stated that there is a "good demon" in us which permits us to use these goods and to reject the wicked force of the soul. He reintroduced conflagration, perhaps under the influence of eastern religions. Poseidonius was studied fervently after 1940 by the German school. However, Caird (*The Evolution of the Theology in the Greek Theology*, Glasgow 1894) did not even mention him. Recently it has been stated that he was the precursor of Cicero and Philo the Jew, since it was Poseidonius who fused Platonism, Stoicism and Aristotelianism, etc.[512]

I. Heninemann (*Poseidonius metaphysische Schriften*, 2 volumes, reprinted in Hildesheim 1963) and H. Pohlenz continued along this path, leading to the impression that here we have a rediscovery in the history of philosophy. This thesis was revised by M. Laffranque (*Poseidonios d'Apamée*, Paris 1964). Nevertheless, it remains true that Poseidonius was one of the greatest geniuses of ancient times in that he developed philosophy in harmony with the sciences of that time.

A third event contributed to the emergence of Rome as a great centre of philosophical culture: the definitive and critical publication of Aristotle's exoteric works. Unlike Tyrannion who, having acquired the precious scrolls at Skepsis from Neleus inheritors, prepared a rudimentary and unsatisfactory publication, Andronicus of Rhodes executed a general restructuring. This latter compiler imposed a systematic order of the works and corrected the obscurities of the scrolls, which had been damaged by moths and maggots. This Roman edition was the root of a rebirth in Aristotelian studies.[513] At the forefront of this rebirth were: Boethius of Sidon, a disciple of Andronicus and Strabo's study colleague, who sought to harmonise Aristotle with some Stoic theses; Xenarch of Seleucia, who came to Rome and became friendly with Arius Didimus and the emperor Augustus; Nicholas of Damascus, also a friend of Augustus and counsellor to king Herod, who authored a work entitled *About Aristotle's Philosophy*, which was preserved in some Syrian-language fragments, and an essay entitled *On Plants*, which was well-known in the Middle Ages in its Latin translation from the Arabic. In the second century A.D., Aristotelism was cultivated by commentators like Aspasius and above all Alexander of Aphrodisias, as we mentioned above in number 147.[514]

2. *The philosophy of Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius*

Marcus Tullius Cicero, of Arpinum (106–43 B.C.) was a splendid orator, politician and philosopher. He also studied in Rhodes and dedicated the later years of his life to philosophy, authoring various works: *Paradoxa Academica*, *De finibus*, *Tusculanae*, *De natura deorum*, *De officiis*, *De fato*, *De Legibus*, etc. His merit does not lie in his philosophy as such, but in the fact that he opened the way for Roman philosophy with a language used until the twentieth century (Bergson received his doctorate in philosophy with the Latin thesis *De natura temporis*). Cicero also adapted Greek philosophy to the Roman character through the doctrinal filter that we now call eclecticism. Cicero was an eclectic in logic, accepting Arcesilaus' and Carneades' probabilism while admitting the Stoic principle of evidence. He successfully examined theological questions, furnishing arguments for the proof of divinity's existence (consensus of peoples, order in the universe), but he did not overcome (it seems) the Stoic idea of God as fire or ether. He was a supporter of the soul's immortality, based on the soul's freedom and capacity to foresee.

Cicero was the first to perceive natural law, when he connected natural inclinations with universal divine law. In *De finibus* he observes that in man "ab initiis naturae" there appears a "sensus", or a perception of self as almost consecrated ("commendatus") to wisdom. Having overcome the obscure messages of inferior nature, man discovers the value of existence; and from this he discovers all other values: "Prima est enim conciliatio hominis ad ea quae sunt secundum naturam". This event consists of a conscious and almost spontaneous appropriation of life's value. What follows is a rationalisation and finally an elevation to an ethical-juridical norm (*De Finibus* III, 7, 23). In a word, Cicero connected the Stoic metaphysics of the "lex aeterna" with personal ethics, hence becoming the first to establish the doctrine of natural law as the manifestation of divine justice. As we can see, the distance between Chrysippus and Cicero is great. Chrysippus formulated the doctrine of universal ethical law, while Cicero applied this in an original and anthropological fashion in the sphere of human justice.

Another concept developed by Cicero in the wake of Panaetius was that of "humanitas", which is not merely the consciousness of feeling oneself to be a man, but culture and its consequent refinement. Cicero's "humanitas" is not merely Panaetius' "euthymia" (which was a concept of personal refinement), but a sense of man's universal vocation to civility and the participation of the 'pax romana' "s social goods (*De Officiis* III, 32; *De Oratore* II, 72).

Seneca (of Córdoba, 2 B.C.?–65 A.D.) was educated in the Stoicism of Attalus and Sotion and later by Papirius Fabianus. He traveled from Rome to Egypt for health reasons. In 38 A.D. he returned to Rome, but after the intrigues of Messaline he was exiled to Corsica in 42. When Nero was elected emperor in 54, he returned and was greeted with great respect and became an imperial counsellor, together with the commander of the Praetorius, Burrus. In 62, Burrus was accused of conspiracy and sentenced to death. Seneca then retired to a private life of studies. However, the unfortunate influence of the empress Poppea attracted Nero's suspicion, and in 65 Seneca was condemned to suicide.

Seneca was a poet, moralist and philosopher. His 124 letters to

Lucilius are famous, where he proposes his elevated ethics[515] and theological doctrine. God is considered creator, Providence and intimate presence in the conscience; and He provokes good acts and supports man in life's trials.

His most original doctrines regard the concepts of conscience and freedom, which come very close to a Platonically dualistic anthropology. The soul is the prisoner of the body (Epist. 65) and aspires to return whence it came, and hence the day of death "is the birthday of immortality" (Epist. 102).[516]

Conscience takes on a meaning heretofore unknown by the Greeks. It is understood first of all as "habitus" (hence the precept of a daily examination of conscience, as the Pythagoreans stated) (*De ira* III, 34), and then as "actus", a concrete judgement on good and evil. This judgement can be *committed*, and hence it is tribunal; or *possible*, in which case it becomes menace, scourge or liberator from all fear (Epist. 97, 12–16).

Freedom is Seneca's most original concept, perhaps the only idea of its kind in all antiquity. First of all, this freedom should not be confused with its political counterpart: "In regno nati sumus; deo parere libertas est" – *De vita beata* XV, 7). "Regnum" was an unpopular word for the Roman because it brought to mind the tyranny of the seven kings of primitive Rome. Therefore, we can be coerced in civil life, but no one can take our interior freedom from us.[517] Seneca lived in an era much changed from the times of Cicero's "humanitas" and "decorum", when the "civitas" as an expression of political freedom was still living in harmony with personal ethics and civil and military responsibilities. Nero's villainy had broken the harmony between the internal forum of conscience and the external forum of politics. Man is worthy not through the "civitas" but for what he has within him: "homo sacra res homini" (Epist. 95, 33); one must be oneself (*De Benef.* IV, 37). Dignity is not acquired with empty talk, as we can see from the scoundrel Didimus, who wrote 400 books on grammar and rhetoric. The cult of words makes one troublesome, verbose and ostentatious, incapable of learning necessary things. Man's dignity lies within, as Terentius teaches: "Homo sum nihil humani a me alienum puto"; "iste versus et in pectore et in ore sit" (Epist. 95, 5).[518] Therefore, it is possible that there be an exterior freedom (to do what one wishes) accompanied by an interior slavery.

Instead, interior freedom is man's fundamental power to do good: "Libertas est potestas vivendi ut velis". This was what Cicero wrote (*De Officiis* I, 70); Seneca developed this concept, aided by the fact that the Greeks did not know the word "voluntas". This freedom does not depend on thought; it is a *faculty distinct from ethical judgements*. "Quid opus est ut sis bonus? Velle!" (Epist. 80), and hence "Velle non discitur". No one can say what the origin of will is (cfr. Epist. 37, 5). Concetto Marchesi comments, "In Seneca's doctrine the moral problem is a *problem of intimate and personal force* against the natural and social forces pressing on us from all directions."[519] "Libertas est eum facere se ex quo solo sibi gaudenda veniant, exteriora deducere a se" (*De Constantia Sapientis* XIX, 2).

No Greek had said that the "voluntas" was an autonomous force with respect to moral conscience. Greek intellectualism, as manifested in Stoic doctrines, continued even after Seneca. Epictetus still insisted that the "prohairesis" is a regular choice of reason. Regarding the mysterious power of the will, only Seneca foresaw modern philosophy in affirming the existential and subjective dominion of will over the intellect, and the will's responsibility before God.[520]

The discussion on sin as an existential structure of man also derives from Seneca's religious sense of will. We are all sinners (*De Ira* 11, 10). Hence the ancient Stoa's distinction between wise men and common men is useless. The wise man is only a model of life, an abstract ideal, because we are all sinners and no one is innocent. In a famous passage, Seneca exclaims: "Who is he who proclaims himself innocent with respect to every law? And even if this were so, what restricted innocence it is to be virtuous according to the norm of the law! How much more extended is the rule of duty compared to the rule of law!" (*Ibid.*).

Seneca is also the source of historical problems because of his presumed contact with Christianity and Christianity's possible contacts with popular Stoicism.[521] But his question I leave to specialists on the subject.

After Seneca, Musonius Rufus of Bolsena appeared in Rome (30–98 A.D.), a man with Cynical and Socratic attitudes, a pacifist and philosopher in the Stoic vein. His *Diatribes* were collected by a certain Lucius. He was exiled by Nero and later by Vespasian. Called to Rome by Titus, he taught a spiritualistic philosophy. Man is a "mímema theoû"; it is necessary to love virtue and virtuous occupations, such as agriculture. He supported the value of legitimate marriages. His works were read by some of the Church Fathers because of their highly religious spirit. His disciple was Epictetus, who was a slave of Hierapolis in Phrigia; and who, after having heard Musonius in Rome, moved to Epirus and founded a school of Stoic philosophy in Nicopolis. His surviving works are a part of the *Diatribes* and a *Manual*; but the latter work was not written by him, but by the Roman General of Nicomedia, Arrhianus. In his works we see an intensely religious spirit, which culminates in a praise of God and a highly elevated morals inspired by the purest Stoic models.

Finally, we should also mention another great Stoic, the emperor Marcus Aurelius (121–180). In his *Memoirs*, written during military campaigns in the form of notes or disparate thoughts, he gives a mystical form to Stoic doctrines and modifies the doctrines with a sense of detached interest for human events, the painful sense of things' frailty, and an intense craving for interior life. The throne which crowned Stoic philosophy was soon to mark its death.

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Peregrinus osophy concludes the Hellenistic period, as we said
"the Capuchins II, Ch 12, n 5. However, in addition of the
impudent and vagabund to Roman tradition, in the first and

second centuries A.D. we note a rebirth of the past doctrines in neo-Pythagoreanism and neo-Cynicism.

Conditions in Rome allowed for the birth of neo-Pythagoreanism. In the fourth B.C., during the Sannitic Wars, statues were erected in honour of Pythagoras.[522] However, even earlier it seems that Numa Pompilius, king of ancient Rome, had been introduced to Pythagorean doctrines. In the times of Pompeus, some Persian magicians came to Rome, who spread word of astrology and awakened an interest in exotic cults. According to Cicero, it was Nigidius Figulus, police magistrate in Rome in 58 B.C. who died there in 45, and who restored Pythagoreanism. He was a magician, philosopher and politician. He wrote a treatise entitled *De diis*. A certain Vatinius seems to have practised spiritism (says Cicero) according to Pythagorean rites. A more famous case is that of Statilius Taurus who lived in the first century A.D. A rich man, he built a luxurious villa, today found outside Porta Maggiore. He instructed that a subterranean Pythagorean temple be built in the garden, and there he practised Pythagorean rites. Tacitus recounts that Agrippina, Nero's mother, wanted to have the gardens and brought an accusation of sorcery against him in 55 A.D. Statilius did not accept the accusation and committed suicide, and the temple was filled with earth. In 1917 a fortuitous blow from a pick led to the discovery of the ancient temple, which was commented on, by the scholar Carcopino in "La basilique pythagoricienne de la Porta Maggiore". With its paintings and wall structure, the temple allows us to study the secrets of neo-Pythagorean rites.

In later centuries (perhaps in Alexandria) the works attributed to Pythagoras or to the mysterious Ocellus Lucanus of the fourth century B.C., such as *Carmen aureum* and *The Nature of All* wims written. nis were

It was the neo-Pythagoreanism of Apollonius of Tyrding to the A.D.), whose life was described by Philostratus (the rule of duty orders of the empress Julia Domna. The biogra which Apollonius is presented as a magical to place his figure alongside Jesus'. The contemporary Masons consider him one of the sect's holy men. We know more about Moderatus of Cadices, who wrote *Pythagorean Schools*, and of Nicomachus of Gerasa (Arabia), who wrote two treatises on Pythagorean theology: *Arithmetic Introduction* (which we have), and *Arithmetic Theology*. Even more important is Numenius of Apamaea, who lived in the second century A.D.. Of him we have fragments from the works *About the Secret Doctrines of Plato*, *On Good*, etc. In addition to magic, the neo-Pythagoreans also practised exotic rites and taught anthropological dualism. On this earth man is a divided being, because the soul is imprisoned in the body and is a servant of the passions. It is necessary to prepare for the soul's return to the superior and divine world. However, we will also discuss Numenius later.

Another movement was that of the *neo-Cynics*. This movement was led by Meleagrus of Gadara (first century A.D.) and other authors, who founded a new rhetoric of the "spoudogéloion", the serious-comic. This is a literary genre which tended to mock all other philosophical systems, particularly that of the Stoics, and to attract disciples to its Cynical message with a detachment from all material goods. Their ethics are hedonistic; but pleasure is not search for itself, but as an emancipation from all asceticism. In addition to this libertarianism, the neo-Cynics taught cosmopolitanism, with an attitude of mocking sufficiency regarding metaphysics. Lucian of Samosata described their life and imitated their style. In a word, they demolished culture while using the most refined type of rhetorics. Their most famous representatives are Demetrius (first century A.D., expelled from Rome in 71 A.D.) and Dion Chrysostom of Prusa in Bytinia (70 A.D.?–140 A.D.?), who was also banished from Rome and travelled throughout the Empire. His *Orations* have survived the centuries. Cynical radicalism was preached by Enomaeus of Gadara, Demonax and Peregrinus Proteus in the second century A.D. They were called "the Capuchins of antiquity", but in many cases they were really impudent and vagabond charlatans.

PART FIVE

FIFTH PERIOD
NEO–PLATONISM

CHAPTER ONE

THE ORIGINS OF NEO-PLATONISM

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1. *Introductory Notes*

There are some opinions (which can be traced back to the Humanistic Renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries) that the historical period from the second and third centuries through the sixth and seventh centuries is a history of desolation and decadence. This opinion was repeated by Molière in the seventeenth century and Montesquieu in the eighteenth century. However, it was the great Englishman Gibbon (1776–1788) who stated that the Holy Roman Empire was neither Holy, nor Roman, nor an Empire. Later condemnations were pronounced by Hegel, Burkhardt and other historians. Some examples: "Lower Empire", "Late-Ancient" (Spätantike), "period of decadence", "darkening of civilisation", etc. (cfr. A. Momigliano, "Il cristianesimo e la decadenza dell'Impero Romano", in Aa. Vv., *Il conflitto tra paganesimo e critianesimo nel sec. IV*, second edition, Turin 1968, pp. 5–19).

This interpretation has been criticised and resisted for some time in the studies of D. V. Ainalov (*The Hellenistic Origin of Byzantine Art*, translated into English, New Brunswick, N. J. 1961), A. Riegl (*Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, translated into Italian under the title *Arte tardoromana*, Turin 1959), and above all by H. I. Marrou, who dedicated his entire career as a historian of ancient art and as a scholar to the history of Christian theology.

According to this author, the new period began with Severus (193–235) and is characterised by the following elements: a) in art, a new spirit pervaded the empire, beginning with the models we still have today (Constantine's Arch, Christian and pagan sarcophagi, the basilicas of Rome, Ravenna, Constantinople, etc.); b) in the literary field, it suffices to mention Tertullian, St. Grgory of Nyssa, Clement of Alexandria and above all Saint Augustine; c) in the religious field, we see a return to a new religiosity, both Christian and pagan. Among the pagans we see Plutarch and later Plotinus. In the second century came the spread of the cult of "Sol invictus" of the god "Mithras", with a disturbing courtship of magical and occult deviations. These cults were opposed by the figure of Christ the "Kosmokrator" (Marrou); d) on the profane cultural level, Christians had no true schools; and the works of sacred culture were expressed in missionary preaching and liturgy. Indeed, the great Fathers of the Church were educated in pagan schools: Clement, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine. This did not change the fact that Christians became the founders of national cultures: Frumentius in the fourth century for the Ethiopians, Quadurtsat for the Huns, Besrob for the Armenians, Ulfila for the Goths, etc.

This means that the generally negative evaluation of this period depends on one's perspective. Still, the panorama is complex and certainly presents both light and shadow. Still, at least in philosophy, the splendour of this era's philosophy certainly surpasses the attainments of the previous centuries.

In its geographical extension, this period includes the centres of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Athens, etc., with highly qualified schools rich in doctrinal discussions. Chronologically this period is usually indicated as beginning with the founder of neo-Platonism, Plotinus (204–270 A.D.) and ending with the closing of the school in Athens (529 A.D.). However, we should note that neo-Platonism was not born suddenly but was preceded by philosophies which flowered in the great cultural centres or crossroads. It was here that the eastern religions encountered and exchanged ideas with Hellenistic and classical philosophy. From this point of view, Alexandria represents the liveliest city. In it met the peripatetic sciences and Hebrew culture, Hellenistic philosophy and Gnosticism, the Academy and the Peripatetic School. Illumination came from Alexandria, and its light shone into Rome and later as far as Pergamus, Antioch, etc. Therefore, in order to perform a complete examination, it is necessary to begin with the precursors, study the authors more profoundly, and conclude with the later followers. The following outline illustrates the path of our studies:

NEO-PLATONISM

Precursors	Authors	Later Followers
a) Judeo-Alexandrian philosophy	Ammonius Saccas	a) Syrian School
b) Gnosticism	Plotinus	b) School of Pergamus
c) Middle Platonism	Porphyry	c) Alexandrian School
		d) Roman neo-Platonism

The characteristics of this philosophy are basically as followes:

a) *in its inspiration*, we see the influence of Egyptian, Chaldean and Judaic eastern religious beliefs, which were proposed by highly intellectual philosophers such as Ammonius, Philo the Hebrew (from Alexandria), Poseidonius and Numenius (of Syria). These beliefs gradually spread to the western areas of the Empire, with the cults of Mithras and the "Sol invictus", from Athens to Rome and Gallia;

b) *in its goal*, this new religious philosophy negatively proposes a critical and symbolic renewal of Hellenistic paganism against the advance of Christianity (see the anti-Christian polemics of Celsus, the emperor Julian, Lucian and perhaps even Plutarch). Positively, it proposes an intimate ethical (or even theosophic) refuge for the religious aspirations of that era. However, in the end, this philosophy transformed itself into magic and theurgy in Syria and Asia Minor;

c) *in its thematics,* the new philosophy proposes a new style for the recognition of the divine in the material world and in man; and it uses both the material world and man as a ladder of ascent to the divine. This subordination of philosophy to religion provokes the fall of speculative investigation of nature and history. Nature and history rest outside the divine drama.

d) *in its structure,* the new philosophy is a critical and symbolising tension of reason which aspires to transfigure itself into a consuming *superhuman* faculty. This faculty is called "faith" and "ecstasy"; and its object is the arcane, the magical, the exoteric and the mystic. Hence the dogmatic tendency of neo-Platonism and the accentuation of the ecstatic factor.

The four characteristics proposed above permit us to define neo-Platonism as eastern in its origin, religious and mystical in its goal, theosophic in its themes, and hyper-rational in its structure.

2. *Judeo-Alexandrian Philosophy*

The spread of religious thought among the pagans began with the Greek-language version of the Bible prepared in Alexandria during the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285–246 B.C.). The Jewish community of Alexandria, although it maintained its contact with Jerusalem, was open to Greek culture, so much so that a description of a Hebrew philosopher, a certain Aristobulos (second-first century B.C.) exists.

The name "Aristobulos", which is Greek, indicates the Hellenisation of the highest officials in the synagogue. Moreover, notwithstanding their apparent intransigence in religious matters, some Israelites (such as the "Therapeutics") formed a sect with neo-Pythagorean tendencies.

Aristobulos, who probably lived in Alexandria under the reign of Ptolemy Philometor (181–175), was called a peripatetic in ancient references. He taught that the Greeks had received wisdom from Moses. He also believed that the Bible had to also be made comprehensible to the pagans by using allegory as an interpretative key in the more anthropomorphic passages of the Pentateuch. It is not implausible that he used some information from earlier sources (of the third century B.C.) such as Hecataeus, the first pagan who wrote a history of the Jews and whose personality is debated even today.[523] He may also have relied on a certain Jew Aristeus (perhaps a forger), who wrote a letter to Philocrates in the second century B.C.

The most famous of the Jewish thinkers was Philo of Alexandria (2 B.C.?–41 A.D.), who came from a family of illustrious bankers. He came to Rome in the times of Claudius to plead the cause of the Jews. Apparently, governor Flaccus had ordered the placing of pagan statues and an image of the Emperor in the synagogues, which provoked a strong Jewish reaction. Philo wrote two supplications, *Contra Flaccum* and *Legatio ad Caium*, in defence of Jewish religious rights to prevent this sacrilege. It seems that he returned to Alexandria without any result, and he died soon after.

His works indicate a vast philosophical formation. He referred to Heraclitus for the doctrine of the "Lógos", to Plato (of the Timaeus) for the creation of the world, Pythagoreanism (as Eusebius of Caesarea attests), Stoicism and Aristotelianism. He wrote 57 works. of which 7 were discovered (in the Armenian language) in Venice in 1822, in the *Island of the Armenians* These works can be classified into three categories: philosophical, exegetical and apologetic. The first group includes *Alexander, or the Brutes who have Reason*, *The Just Man is Free*, and *Providence*. The second group includes *Eternity of the World*, *De opificio mundi*, *De Cherubim*, *etc.*, and the third includes *De vita Mosis*, *Contra Flaccum*, etc.[524] In general, these works are quoted according to their Latin titles. It should be noted that recently, Roberto Radice collected 1095 works written about Philo between 1937 and 1982 (*Filone Alessandrino, Bibliografia Generale*, Milan 1983).

Philo's philosophy does not lend itself to a systematic exposition.[525] I shall limit myself to four arguments:

A) *Exegetic allegorism*: Philo, believing that the Bible is inspired by God, states that a reading of sacred texts requires symbolisation, or the use of allegory, wherever the literal recounting is not appropriate for God. While Plato reduced the function of allegory to the minimum out of his preference for myth, Philo states that the Bible is an allegorical philosophy without referring to other philosophies. Plato works from the universal (ideas) to the myth (the particular). Philo works from the particular (Biblical recounting) to the universal (see above, number Part III, Ch. 4, n. 6)[526] but with a grave prejudice regarding religious truth, because if this truth is entrusted to reason, then the definitive judgement belongs to man. The literal sense is not rejected by Philo, but he compares this to a body's shadow. For example, God did not create the world in six days because time was created after the world. Nevertheless, the number six is symbolic insofar as it is the first number which results from the dyad and triad and not the monad. It expresses the matter (= 2) and the solid body (= 3). Therefore, in the creation of Adam, man signifies the creation of the spirit and woman signifies the creation of sensibility. Noah's Ark symbolises the intelligible world, while the Tower of Babel expresses the individual's moral disorder.

We know that allegory as a hermeneutical criterion was used by the Christian philosophy of Alexandria, especially by Origen.

B) *Theological emanationism*: On the one hand, Philo is careful to avoid all anthropomorphism. God is ineffable in His transcendence. Therefore, He is above good and beauty. Contrary to Plato, Philo says that God is the sun of suns and light of lights (*Rep.*, 509 b). Nevertheless, Philo sometimes contradicts himself by identifying God with good; but, this is not infrequent in the Jewish philosopher's writings when we take into account his numerous writings. Nevertheless, when confronting God's transcendence, he points to Biblical texts, especially the celebrated declaration found in Exodus.

"That which we do not understand of Him and His being is outside of his being, nothing (*Quod Deus sit Immut.*, 62), as Exodus states: 'I am who I am', the most determined."

Note the new concept of the infinite; it is determined, and not the most undetermined, as Plotinus stated. This theological novelty will have a great effect on later Christian religious speculation.[527]

In this way, God "is more original than the monads, more simple than unity. Therefore, He cannot be contemplated by anyone; and only He can understand Himself" (*De Praemiis et poenis* II, 414). He is everywhere and nowhere, present and absent, He contains and is transcendent.

This negative theology leads Philo to affirm both the capacity to know of God's existence and the incapacity to know and ineffability of His essence.[528]

On the other hand, Philo tends to bind God with the world through creation, which is a gratuitous act of God. However, his explanation is ambiguous. He states, "God brought forth all things from matter without having contact with matter because it would not be appropriate for a Wise and holy God to touch the undetermined and the unformed. He used the corporeal potencies, and he used them as intermediaries . . ." (De sacrificantibus II, 261). In this and analogous passages we see Philo's willed reticence on some perceived problems. The first problem is this: Philo does not affirm the eternity or non-eternity of matter.[529] The second obscure aspect of creation regards Philo's use of intermediaries. Sometimes we read that the Eternal used "god" ("theòs"), or "Elohim", which is the Hebrew word for God), but which for Philo indicates a negative potency, while "kyrios" ("Jehovah" in Hebrew) indicates the punishing potency. "Theos" and "kyrios" are unified in the "Lógos", which we will discuss later.

The "intermediaries" are the fundamental principle in grounding God's transcendence and in distinguishing neo-Platonic philosophy from all earlier currents. Philo was perhaps the most conspicuous precursor of this line of thought. However, their conceptual determination is not clear in Philo, nor is it explained fully in later doctrinal developments.[530] In fact, the intermediaries are indeterminate in number and are variously described by Philo as Platonic ideas, angels, "potencies" ("dynamis"), the "Sephirot" of the Hebrew Cabal, the benevolent demons of Greek mythology, the "rationes seminales" of the Stoics, or entities similar to courtesans surrounding the throne of an eastern monarch. In *Quaestiones in Exodum* II, 68 we read that at first there is the Absolute, then the "Lógos" of being, which is the generating substance of being. Two potencies detach themselves from the "Lógos", the creative and the royal. From the creative potency emanates the beneficent potency, and from the royal one emanates the punitive potency. In general, Philo proposes six primary "potencies": the creative, the royal, providence, the compensatory, the punitive and the beneficent. However, do these divine genealogies safeguard God's transcendence?

C) *Doctrine of Logos*: Philo's Logos is the most important divine "potency". It is called a "second God" and an "image of God". Obviously, Philo attempted a theory of the Logos by combining Heraclitean-Stoic-Platonic requirements with the grandiose representation of "God's Wisdom" (*Wisdom* 18:15). However, here as well, he oscillates between Greek philosophy and Biblical texts. In agreement with the Stoics, the Logos is the unexpressed word of God ("lógos endiáthetos"), an active immobility of thought (Aristotle?). However, in creation God expresses his word by making it extrinsic ("lógos prophorikós"). The word detaches itself and becomes a paradigm, shadow; image and divider ("lógos toméus") of the world's creation. One texts states, ". . . matter are the four elements of which it was constructed, the instrument is the divine Logos through which it has been constructed; the goal of creation is the Goodness of the Creator" (*De Cherubim*, 126–127). Elsewhere Philo expresses himself with the analogy of an architect; before proceeding to construction, a project is necessary. The Logos is the incorporeal model. Still, there is lack of Greek references: it is the spermatic substance of being, the bond of the world, the destiny of the world, the shadow of God. "It is not ungenerated, as God is, nor is it generated as we are, but it rests between the two extremes and participates in them" (Quis rerum div. heres sit., 42.) It is the divine minister and Demiurge and "the intelligible world is but the Logos of God, but of God the Creator" (*De Opif. Mundi*, 5). Therefore, it is the intelligible cosmos, containing all the ideas, and the image of all images. However, the ideas are created "ab aeterno", and they are not potencies, but simple paradigms.

Therefore, Philo overcame the Platonic dilemma: ideas or demiurge, thinking thought or thought thought. The Logos is thought which is thought by God, and the thinking thought of the ideas. This unification had an enormous influence in all Christian theology, but its limits are easily perceptible. The Logos-model is of Platonic origin, while the Logos-divider is from Heraclitus and the seminal Logos comes from the Stoics. Only the Logos-creator and Logos-mediator are concepts with a Biblical origin.[531] Philo was the first philosopher to introduce the concept of creation; he marvelled at the fact that preceding philosophers had not reached this truth. God produced things from non-being ("ek toû mè óntos eis tò eînai" – *De vita Mosis* II, 267). An important quote:

> God, when He generated all things, did not simply make them visible [anti-Platonic polemics?], but He produced what earlier was not, since He was not only the Demiurge, but also the Creator ["ou demiourgòs mónon, allà kaì ktístes autòs on"] (*De Somniis* I, 76).

D) *Mystical anthropological dualism*: Philo's man is not a unity. "God made man not an image, but in an image" (*Quis rerum heres sit*, 48). Through this image, which is intelligence ("noûs", "pneûma") man becomes a person as a radiation of God. However, through the body and vital principle ("psyché"), man is irrationality and folly, fascination and deception. The man who came from the hands of God is "Kàt eikóna", the man – "species", a celestial man, neither male nor female. The terrestrial man born of a woman is inclined to evil.

From man's unstable equilibrium, Philo arrives at the need for a moral life which would not be governed by human forces. Certainly, man must struggle against sensuality and pride, but a need for a higher life surpassing the Greek "areté" also exists. Ethics are not pure human reasoning but a conformity to revéaled divine law and an assimilation with God (here he condemns Plato's *Symposium* for the pederasty it tolerated).

There are three stages of this ascent: ascetics, philosophical wisdom and ecstasy. The first is the renunciation adoring the world, which is characteristic of the Chaldean mind. The second stage is offered by philosophical knowledge, which use the "encyclical" sciences, such as geometry, rhetoric and grammar. Philosophical science is a knowledge freeing us from the body, the senses, and language; it initiates us into a "mentality of strangers" and reminds us that true good surpasses the deceptions and spells of human reality. The third stage is ecstasy, which is the purest and most perfect intelligence," the initiation to the great mysteries, which knows the Cause not from its effects, as the real object is known from its shadow. Having surpassed change, it receives a clear apparition of ungenerated being . . . ." (*Allegoria Leg.* III, 99–100).

Ecstasy is a gift of God, which comes from the heavens like rain and is conceded for brief instants to perfect souls, as occurred to Moses on Mount Sinai. Generally, it is impossible in terrestrial life.[532] Like all the Chaldeans, Abraham was a sophist, but through a gift of God ("faith" or "wisdom") he became a wise man, and even a prophet. Therefore, the itinerary to reach God is mystical, but it presupposes a strong vigour of free and self-determined will ("kinesis", in Seneca's meaning of self-decision), which is ready to reject sin. Sin is not only error (in contrast with the Greek's ethical intellectualism), but pride ("philautía"), pretence ("óiesis") and inclinations toward atheism. Philo presents the two ways in the example of Cain and Abel.

As a whole, the judgement on Philo's philosophy can only be highly positive. Philo is a critical figure; and his philosophy is an event of exceptional importance because if he (as we have seen) is the source for Christian philosophy, then he belongs to all European culture, to this very day. Another reason also exists: he influenced Numenius of Apamaea, who was one of the authors most studied by Plotinus. This is his second merit; he was truly the first precursor of neo-Platonism.

CHAPTER TWO

GNOSTICISM

1. *The Gnostic Question in General*

There is no doubt that Gnosticism had some effect on neo-Platonism. Referring to the practices and prayers of contemporary Gnostics, Plotinus declared, "It is worthy to mention the other entities that they [the Gnostics] invented: living in a strange place, antitypes and penitences. If these were passions of the soul, immersed in penitence, and if they called antitypes what is contemplated as images of beings and not the beings themselves, then they were men who spoke randomly, only to support the doctrine they proposed" (*Enneads* II, 9, 6; cfr. also II, 9, 18). Notwithstanding Plotinus' rejection, there can be no doubt that these were elements of little importance. As we read in Plotinus, the hierarchical vision of the world descends from the supreme principle, called the Ineffable or the Invisible, through divine inferior beings, which, as intermediaries, connect the Absolute and the material world (*Enneads* IV, 8, 1; V, 1, 4; etc.). This framework of eons is common both in Plotinus and in all the Gnostics.

Therefore, we may surely classify their doctrines as more or less approximate anticipations of neo-Platonism,[533] especially because certain theurgic practices narrated by Porphyry regarding Plotinus (*Life*, 23) show the influence of Chaldean or Egyptian rites as they were practised by the Gnostics.

Still, Plotinus' relations with the Gnostics were of opposition. In the *Vita Plotini*, 16 we read that around 250 in Rome, the Sethians (a Gnostic sect) provoked objections based on their sacred book, *The Book of Allogenus*. However, in introducing the three hypostases, Plotinus was not guided by the fantastic emanations of the Gnostics but attempted a systematisation of the divine according to a typically Hellenic rationalism. Even ecstasy is turned into dialectics. V. Cilento, one of the most outstanding scholars of Plotinus, states that "other characteristics distancing the Gnostics from Plotinus are that the production of the Eons is not necessary or eternal, but depends on the will of the Prime Principle. Another difference is sexuality, the 'erotic transfer' sublimated to the spiritual world, which is characteristic of Simonian and Valentinian Gnosticism. Among the Simonians [Sethians] a majority is entrusted to the great Mother, the 'magna peccatrix', the terrestrial Helen, oscillating between the ancient 'epos' and the later Faust. Meanwhile, Valentinianiam is a true orgy of 'prounikia', longing and pairs. Plotinus is far from all this." (*Plotino*, *Paideia Antignostica*, *Ricostruzione d'un unico scritto da Ennedi III 8*, *X 8*, *II 9*, Florence 1971, p. 24).

Nevertheless, the Plotinian school, having moved eastward, was later influenced by Gnosticism, beginning with Iamblichus, Proclus and the various neo-Platonic schools. Having established the connection between Gnosticism and neo-Platonism, we still face an important question regarding Gnosticism's nature and history.

Until the nineteenth century, the Gnostics were known through the polemical writings that some Church Fathers wrote against them, especially St. Irenaeus of Lyon (*Adversus haereses*), who died in 213 A.D., Hippolytus of Rome (*Philosophumena*, written around the end of the second century A.D.), Tertullian (*De praescritione haereticorum*, *De anima*, *Adversus Valentinianos*, *Adversus Marcionem*, *Adversus Hermogenem*) and Epiphanius with his *Panarion*. The impression we receive is that the Gnostics were heretics, but we do not glean a precise indication of their origin. Were they perverse Christians or infiltrated pagans? It does not seem that the Church Fathers raised this question. Saint Irenaeus (II, 19) declares that "most likely" they were Christians who had adorned revelation with myths taken from Hesiod and Homer. Only in the nineteenth century do we find a more precise examination under the influence of important documentary discoveries. Around the end of the eighteenth centuries, some important pergamenes were transferred to England from Egypt. An initial collection was edited by A. Askew (died 1772), a Londoner whos work was given to the British Museum in 1785 and which is now titled the *Codex askewianus*. This collection contains the Gnostic book Pistis Sophia in the Shaidic language on 178 sheets, which can be traced (according to C. Schmitt, who edited a definitive and critical edition on them in 1925) back to the second half of the fourth century. A few years earlier, in 1769, another manuscript arrived from Thebes (Egypt) in London through the work of James Bruce. This manuscript is now called the *Codex Brucianus* and is the property of the Bodleian Library. It is written in the Copto-Shaidic language, as was the preceding work; but it can be concluded that the source was originally written in Greek and later translated.[534] The volume is called the *Mystery of the Great Logos* or the *Book of Jeu*. In 1896, C. Schmitt gave the Akhmin codex to the Berlin Academy, later called the *Papyrus berolinensis 8502*, which contains a part of the *Gospel of Mary Magdalene*, a brief summary of the *Apocrypha of John*, and the *Sophia Iesu Christi*.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, following these and other discoveries, scholars supported two opposing theories. Adolf Harnack defined Gnosticism as an "acute Hellenisation of Christianity" and a grave infiltration of Greek (especially Platonic) philosophy, along with some Iranian elements (*Geschichte des antiken Christentum* I, Munich 1954, p. 268). This was also stated by H. Leisegang. On the contrary, the German school of the History of Religions, established by Wilhelm Bousset and Richard Reitzenstein, spread the opinion that Gnosticism was an origin with an eastern, and particularly Iranian and Zoroastrain origin. Therefore, it was a pessimistic and dualistic religious movement which dissolved into the later followers of Hellenistic philosophies. At this point, a new fact overturned the previous theories and hypotheses,[535] the chance discovery in 1945 at Nag-Hammadi, along the banks of the Nile about 60 kilometres from Luxor. Here, before the ancient monastery of Saint Anthony of Chenoboskion, was discovered an amphora full of Gnostic documents from the end of the fourth century. The Egyptian government, owner of the precious library, entrusted the study and publication of the ancient manuscripts to an international commission. The library is a collection of 13 volumes or scrolls, containing a total of 1400 original pages, of which only 1130 have been preserved (some were used by the bedouins to start a fire after the discovery!). In 1964, Professor Ugo Bianchi organised the first international congress in Messina dedicated to the study of this precious discovery.[536] Another two congresses were held more recently, after the publication of 53 Gnostic treatises from Nag-Hammadi. The first was at Yale University in New Haven Connecticut (*The Rediscovery of Gnosticism*, *Proceedings of the International Conference of Gnosticism at Yale University*, *Connecticut*, *March 28–31 1978*, in two volumes, Leiden. Volume I: "The School of Valentinus"; Volume II: Sethian Gnosticism", 1981). Another congress was held in 1979, published in *Gnosis and Gnosticism*, *Papers Read at the Eighth International Conference on Patristic Studies*, *Oxford*, *September 3–8 1979*. A continuation of the dicussion in Messina took place in the form of two other congresses: one in Rome in 1978 (*Regio-Historical Character of Roman Mithraism*, *Etudes préliminaires*, Leiden 1978); and another, more extended symposium published and edited by Ugo Bianchi and Maarten J. Vermaseren: *La soteriologia dei culti orientali nell'Impero Romano*, Leyden 1982. Today almost no one negates the syncretistic character of Gnosticism, its fusion of various religious elements. A second observation we must make is that this movement was not the profession of a single belief. Already in the fourth century, Epiphanius listed 60 Gnostic sects, although at the time the Valentinian and Marcionite Gnosticism were two very strong currents. A third observation, shared by many scholars, is that its origin was Judaic, even if later it was introduced into the Hellenistic, Chaldean, Persian and Manicheistic world.[537] Its principal forms were the anti-Judaic Marcionites, the pagan Carpocrates, the dualists Basilides and Saturninus, and the pantheist Valentinus. A fourth fact is that Gnosticism came after the New Testament.[538] A fifth observation is that the Essenes, the well-known religious Jews who lived a devoted community life on the Dead Sea in the times of Jesus, did not profess Gnosticism, although they cultivated the cryptic reading of numbers.[539] According to Peterson, G. Quispel ("Gnosticism and the New Testament", in *Vigiliae Christianae* 1–9, 1965, pp. 65–85), Alexander Böhling (*Der judische und juderchristlichbher Hintergrund in gnostichen Texten von Nag-Hammadi* Coll., pp. 109–140), Giorgio Jossa (*Considerazioni sulle origini dello gnosticismo in relazione al giudaismo*, Coll., pp. 413–426) and especially Robert M. Grant (*La gnose et les origines chrétiennes*, translated from English, Paris 1964), Gnosis was born from Judaism after the year 70 and hence after the destruction of Jerusalem. This is the thesis which seems most plausible to us without excluding the fact that the movement attempted to infiltrate all the religions of that era in the second and third centuries.

Therefore, we exclude the possibility of a Greek origin (supported by E. R. Dodd in *The Greeks and the Irrational*, Berkeley 1959), or an Iranian or Hellenistic one (purported by Pierre Boyancé in *Dieu cosmique et dualisme*, *Les Archontes et Platon*, Coll., pp. 340–356), or a Middle Platonic one (cfr. Festugière, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismegistos*, Volume I, Chapter 4). Nonetheless, we admit that in the third and fourth centuries Gnosticism doubtless invaded Greek religion and neo-Platonic philosophy.

Our hypothesis is based on a psychological fact. After the destruction of their temple and their dispersion, some Jews felt themselves to have been betrayed by God, in which case history would be absurd, Scripture is false, and the world is wicked. Those who escaped the disaster of 70 A.D. escaped to Syria and especially to Alexandria, with rancour against God and hatred of the Romans in their hearts. Then the "rabid ones" arose (as they were called by second-century rabbis). These people, after the final failure of the anti-Roman revolt and the death in 132 of their prophet, Bar Kocheba, elaborated an apocalyptic literature with a semi-pagan and cosmological foundation, in which God and man are the poles between which the divine drama unfolds. This was a "pathomorphic" creation (as Hans Jonas stated), a catastrophe which provoked a disturbance at the centre, which began a separation, descent, fall and alienating exile. This fall was to be followed by a return reserved to few, to the elect ones who, having been initiated in the science of the divine mystery ("gnosis"), would be able to save themselves and return peacefully to the Principle.

In general, the Gnostics gave the Principle and the detached beings Biblical names, but with a negative meaning: Satan in the place of God, Cain or Seth (who, according to Egyptian myth, killed his brother, the god Osirid) in the place of Adam, the tempting serpent, the prince of demons (called Jabaldaoth and having the figure of a donkey, pig or dog), Esau the outcast, the Abyss (or "Bythos"), the Silence ("Sigé"), chaos, and emptiness.

2. *Gnostic Doctrines*

Gnosticism's fundamental question is its religious philosophy. Who is man? Where does he come from? Where is he? Who will free him? However, their anthropology is pessimistic; man is fallen. A grandiose and terrible idea rests behind these questions: at the beginning the "Silence" or the "Abyss" existed, but a rebellion of beings inferior to him, called eons or archonts, provoked a descending genealogy of other beings, through couplings (in Greek, "zygytiae") which transmitted evil into matter. The last archont or eon is the "Sophia", which generated man and imprisoned the spark, the soul, in the body, as a pearl is lost in a marsh. Therefore, the human condition is wicked and a prison. However, not all men understand this misadventure. According to the Valentinians, men are divided into three classes: the "hylics", the "psychics" and the "pneumatics". The first live like beasts, and for them there is no salvation. The second can choose one of the two ways. The elect few, the "pneumatics", receive the "gnosis", or revelation, awaken from their sleep and know the divine surrounding them. They are the elect, the perfect, the loved, children of the Ungenerated. Only they receive the notion of generation and of regeneration, of palingenesis, of rebirth to divine life, the return to the "autogenés" (*Le tre stele di Seth*, Erbetta, op. cit., p. 563); only they are "three times men".

From this initial sketch, we see that Gnosticism can be reduced to three fundamental conceptions: cosmogony, anthropology and soteriology.

3. *Cosmogony*

Gnosticism is not a defined series of doctrines but a multitude of opinions, which (working from the brief sketch given above) include significant variations, additions and accentuations.

In cosmogony, we see the idea of the Naassenes (from the Hebrew "naas", or serpent), as it is explained by Hippolytus (Philosophumena V, 6–1). They claimed that at the beginning of the world, two androgynes were born from the earth. The earthy is identified with Isides, who searches for Osirid as being responsible for the birth of the two personages, according to the revelation of the god Hermes.

A more complex idea is proposed by the so-called Barbelo-Gnostics (also called Zaccheans, Coddians and Stratiotics), who said that the authentic revelation was given to Zacharias, to whom appeared the god-donkey in the monstrous form of a man with a donkey's head. Their sacred books were the apocryphal writings *The Generation of Maria*, *The Gospel of Perfection*, and the *Gospel of*

Philip. The revelation is this. At the beginning a divine triad existed: the Ungenerated, also called Male, who was the first man, the Pure, the "Abyss", Barbelo, Monotes, Nothingness, and non-God. The second hypostasis was the "second man", also called "Prunicus" (which means licentious), who was considered the hermaphrodite, but is sometimes called Mother, Female, Son of man, Serpent, First Thought, Darkness, Elohim, and first wife. The third hypostasis is called "first woman", "Prime Matter", Female, Eden, "Sigé" (Silence), and Second Thought. Inferior reality emanates from this triad by detaching itself from the third hypostasis, with a number of 364 eons matching the days of the calendar and manifesting a clearly Iranian influence. The seven days of the week are presided over by seven rebellious eons, who out of jealousy imprisoned the third hypostasis: they are Jaldabaoth, Jao, Sabaoth, Adonai, Astaphaeus, Aiolaeus and Horaeus and are represented or symbolised with seven animals: serpent, lion, donkey, hyena, satan, monkey and fire. These seven eons, together with the divine triad, make up the first ogdoad. There follow another 22 creative emanations in decades and duodecades, and hence 30 eons are obtained for the lunar calendar. The last eon is Sophia, which decays and produces the material world: from a "pleroma", it becomes a "kénoma". The number 364 is not an astronomical time frame, but a mystical space called "abrasax" in which emanation is realised.

4. *Anthropology*

Man, like the world, is a malignant work, a deception, a trick of the demons who fooled the Absolute and created man against his will. In its "pneûma" it is a divine spark, but it is soiled in matter. The body is wicked, as procreation is wicked. Hence we have the condemnation of marriage, as an imitation of the sacrilege of the archonts or demons who deceived the Sublime Principle. Multiplication is a detachment from the One, an abandon of the Principle, just as procreation is a diabolical work. Saint Irenaeus

(*Adver. Haer.* I, 1–12), in referring to the doctrine of the Valentinians, recounts the doctrine of a certain Ptolemy, who in his cosmogony imitated everything explained above. He then divided men into hylics, psychics and pneumatics (I, 6), affirming that the latter will lay down their "psychai", or souls, to become pure spirits and appear before the Soter or Demiurge (Erbetta, *op. cit.*, p. 576). As we can see, the Gnostics negate man's knowledge of God through reason. Only a divine revelation and an ecstasy can cast off the great veil of divine catastrophe and return one to the Principle.

In general, Gnostic ethics are severe. However, in certain cases we find sacrilegious follies of abominable moral indecencies, as Epiphanius recounts in his *Panarion* (XXVI, 4–5; Erbetta, pp. 592–593).

5. *Eschatology and Soteriology*

The Gnostics, with rare exceptions, believed that for a return to the principle, it was necessary to make use of "mysteries", or rites and formulas, as a sign of communion with divinity. For example, the Ophites (adorers of the serpent), also called Sethians or Pérates, who were widespread in Egypt, adored live serpents. They bred serpents in certain dens, and in their "eucharistic" ceremonies they exhibited them in flowered baskets full of bread. The serpent nested in the basket, and was then made harmless with magical arts. Then those invited, after prayers and songs, took the bread and kissed the serpent's snout. Sometimes the use of an image was sufficient (cfr. M. Crameri, *I vangeli apocrifi*, Turin 1969).

In addition to their "sacramental" thought, the Gnostics also indulged in the cryptic reading of sacred texts. The Codex Brucianus, or Book of Jeu, is an essay of extraordinary symbolic fantasy, with a florid use of symbolic numbers applied to the eons. There were circles, squares, ellipses, pointed, forked and rounded stars, chessboards with Greek letters, halos with terminal circles, interlocking disks; all these figures were given a name from the

Greek alphabet in reference to the eons. We read in text 2, 5: "There come the 15 servants to the service of the seven virgins of light, proposed for the baptism of light, whose ineffable names are these: Astrapa, Tephoide, Ontonios, Sinetos, Lachon, Poditanios, Opakis, Phaidros, Odontuchos, Diaktios, Knesion, Dromos, Audetos, Polypaidos, Sutropon. They come and baptise my apostles with the water of light of the seven virgins of light" (Erbetta, *op. cit.*, p. 339). For a curiosity regarding the abuse of the cryptic reading (or palindrome) of the Greek alphabet, see Saint Irenaeus, *Adv. Haeres.* I, 13, where the writer refers the attempts of the Gnostics to transform the evangelical parables into sacred numbers. For example, the lost drama = 10 − 1, and the lost sheep = 12 − 1 = 11. The two parables produce the numbers 9 × 10 = 99, which symbolises the number of faithful eons. Even more complicated is the interpretation of "Amen" (*Ibid.*).

Clearly, the Gnostics took the sacred symbolism of numbers from the Chaldeans. Saint Irenaeus also offers this example of an arcane formula: "Basyma esacabasa irrauista dyrbada caetoba fober canelanthis", which (as the Saint translates, means, "I invoke the power of the Father, who is above every power; the father who is called light, spirit and life, because you have reigned in the body" (I, 17).

This method of concealing the mystery with numbers of barbarian languages was also used by the Jews after the second century. They inculcated the mystical interpretation of the Bible, communicated (they said) by God to Adam, Abraham, Moses, Joshua and finally the rabbis. There are three types of "Kabbalà" (tradition): a) "ghematria", which leads to the composition of new words by means of other Hebrew words; b) "Themurà", which teaches the interpretation of the first letter of the alphabet with the last, the second with the next-to-last, and so forth; c) "Notorikà", which teaches how to read other words with their initials. The "Kabbalà" already existed before Philo, but rapidly became popular in the Gnostic period. After the fifth century, it also made use of some Christian elements.[540] This allows us to add (as Doresse said)[541] that the Gnostics believed in the continuation of the Magusans, i.e. Persian magicians who lived in Asia Minor from the third century B.C. and were very numerous in the first century B.C. This explains why the Gnostic books of Nag-Hammadi include not only Gnostic writings in a Christian disguise and Christian books with Gnostic accentuations written by Christian Gnostics, but also Iranian apocalypses (*Letter to Eugnostus*, *The Three Pillars of Seth*) and "hermetic" writings (*Apocalypse of Asclepius*, *The Authentic Teaching and Disourse on the Ogodoad and on the Ennead*).

This is the reason we include in our Gnostic study the so-called *Oracula Chaldaica* and the *Corpus Hermeticum*. Doresse has established a strict correspondence between the *Apocalypse of Dositheus*, the *Authentic Discourse of Hermes to Toth*, and the *Corpus Hermeticum*. Chapter XVIII of the *Corpus* would correspond to the *Logos Katholikós* or *Hieròs Lógos* of VI, 2, 4, 6 of Nag-Hammadi.

Little more can be said bout the Oracula Chaldaica. It seems to have been written in exametric verse by a certain Julian Theurgus in the times of Marcus Aurelius. In its doctrinal part, it proposes a model typical to the Gnostics. An ineffable divine triad exists. It is made up of the Father, the Intellect and the Potency. In its religious part it inculcates theurgy, which Dodds correctly distinguished into magical theurgy and medianic theurgy. *Magical theurgy*, or "telestiké" in Greek, is the conviction that one can arrive at the Ineffable through the adoration of fetishisms. Statues of the gods were made; and they were filled with herbs, stones, perfumes and inscribed letters in order to create a cosmic "sympathy" between the god and the cosmos. The statue was invoked with exotic words and barbaric languages in order to honour and invoke the deity. *Medianic theurgy* was the use of a medium, which, invaded by the god, could be invited by an operator ("kletor") to give responses on the divinity, the deceased, and on demons.[542]

The *Corpus Hermeticum* is a collection of many writings dedicated to "the superlative and great Hermes", "Trismegistos", which is the Greek name for the Egyptian god Toth. The writings supposedly include the revelations of the god Hermes, and are divided into two groups. The first group contains an exposition of the popular occult sciences and of philosophical-religious experiences. The second group of writings contains seventeen treatises, with number XVIII entitled "Poimandres". Also included is "Asclepius", a Latin translation of a previous Greek work from the fourth century. Later, Stobaeus and other Christian writers inserted quotes into the *Corpus Hermeticum.*

The ideas proposed in these writings are not different from those of the Gnosticism examined above. In cosmogony, it is stated that at the beginning the First God, the androgyne, existed. Through generation the Logos followed, the firstborn son of the first; the third eon is the Demiurge, which generates an "Anthropos", an incorporeal man, image of God, third-born. This man crosses seven celestial spheres until he reaches the moon; from here he descends to the earth because of his love of water, and terrestrial man is born, half spiritual and half material. Liberation and return is realised through the "gnosis", the knowledge of self. In death one realises the divinisation of the spirit together with the supreme god.

We may conclude our study, in agreement with the scholars of Gnosticism, that this movement spawned a variety of branches or manifestations: Marcionism, Middle Platonism, Manichaeanism, Sethianism and Valentinianism. However, these branches always exhibit two substantial forms: a parody of traditionl Judaism (Grant's thesis), and an allegorical metaphor against Christianity, as proposed by the Sethians and the Valentinians. This is the conclusion of the above-mentioned Congress held in New Haven in 1978, and the results are published in *The School of Valentinus* (Leyden, 1980) and *Sethian Gnosticism* (Leyden, 1981).[543]

6. *Middle Platonism*

Between the Fifth Academy, founded by Antioch of Ascalon, and Plotinus, Platonism suffered through a period of internal crisis. This crisis was caused by the destruction of its Athenian buildings, intense polemics, and the external pressure of Christianity. On the one hand, the reaction was a triumphal eclecticism. On the other hand, around the second century A.D., there was a tendency to return to the genuine thought of Plato, with a particular accent placed on the Timaeus and the Republic. This was visible in Atticus and Calvisius Taurus. This Platonism of recovery cannot be associated with one of the various Academies and was not the Platonism of the Scholarchs.

However, we cannot call this neo-Platonism" because it was not yet thought appropriate to expressly make use of the theory of the "intermediaries" as proposed by Philo and by Numenius of Apamaea. For this reason, K. Prächter, in his famous work *Die Philosophie des Altertums* and in other works, introduced the now-common expression "Middle Platonism". This term includes, according to his researches, 23 philosophers who lived from the first through the third centuries A.D.: Albinus (second century, Galen's teacher), Ammonius the Egyptian (Plutarch's teacher), an anonymous commentator on the *Theaethetus*, Apuleius of Madaura (the first Roman Middle Platonist),[544] Arpocration of Argus (disciple of Atticus), Atticus (famous around 170 A.D.; we have some of his fragments, passed on to us by Proclus and Eusebius of Caesarea), Calvisius Taurus of Berytus (second century, Gellius' teacher), Celsus (the second-century author of an anti-Christian work entitled True Discourse), Dercillides (first half of the first century), Herod Atticus (101–177, more a man of letters than a philosopher), Gaius (second century; he inspired a circle of Platonists including Albinus and Apuleius), Hieratius (second century), Juncus, Lucius (second century; he attacked the doctrine of Aristotelian categories), Maximus of Tyre (famous around 180), Nichostratus Claudius (famous around 160–170), Nigrinus (second century), Onaxander, Plutarch of Cheroneas, Severus, Theo N. F. of Smyrna, Thrasyllus of Alexandria (astrologer at Tiberius' court, who professed Pythagorean and Platonist principles and organised Plato's writings).

According to G. Reale, the tendencies of Middle Platonism are: a) the recovery of the incorporeal or the immaterial, against the popular materialism propounded by the Stoics and Epicureans; b) a reconsideration of the doctrine of the ideas; c) a new reading of the *Timaeus*; d) an introduction to and evaluation of demonology, based on eastern and Egyptian influences; e) an ethical proposal based on the "resemblance to God"; f) a recovery of transcendence, outside every dogmatism.[545]

The religious spirit and strong aspiration for transcendence lead us to believe that the movement originally developed in Alexandria and later spread elsewhere. Dercillides and Eudorus lived in Alexandria in the first century A.D. However, since this was a movement, it would be improper to give their teaching a single label. For example, there was religious syncretism in the circle of Gaius (which included Albinus and Apuleius), and Platonic orthodoxy (with Plutarch, Calvisius Taurus and Nichostratus). It is more logical to express the philosophy of some individuals, according to the character distinguishing them, since all these philosophers were not syncretists or Orthodox Platonists.

Plutarch of Cheroneas (50?–120 A.D.), of a noble family, was well-travelled and established a Platonic circle in Athens afer being taught by the Egyptian master Ammonius. He wrote 227 works, of which only 83 have been preserved. Among the most famous we should mention *Parallel Lives* and his moral and religious works (*The Delphic E*, where he identifies God with being, from the Delphic E, which means "You are"). He believed that matter is eternal, is animated by a wicked spirit, and has no intelligence. Man is a mixture of matter and spirit.

Albinus of Smyrna wrote a *Didskalikos*, in which (contrary to Plutarch) he taught that the world and its soul are co-eternal with God.

The Middle Platonists also taught demonology, or the existence of divine beings inferior to the secondary gods, different from one another in grade but able to ascend to the level of gods.

In ethics, a common anthropological dualism pushes all the

Middle Platonists to develop the Platonic concept of the "homoiosis" or "assimilation with God", contrary to the Stoic principle to "follow nature". In this area we should sketch the figure of Numenius of Apamaea, whom we mentioned above (number Part IV, Ch. 5, n. 3), and who (along with the neo-Pythagorean movement) introduced some important concepts tied to Platonic tradition.

Born around 100 A.D., he harmonised Platonism with Pythagoreanism. We have received some interesting fragments of his works *On the Infidelity of the Academics to Plato* and the *Treatise on Good*. These fragments are a prelude (together with Gnosticism) to the adoption of the divine hypostases, perhaps through a new interpretation of the *Timaeus*. In addition to the concept of "incorporeal", which he developed in opposition to Stoic and Epicurean materialism, he studied Judaism, to the point where he said that Plato was the Moses who spoke Greek. He had contacts with Christianity, and (importantly for the further development of neo-Platonism) he introduced the doctrine of the three gods. There is a Father, called the First; the Second, called the Creator; and the Third, called "Creature". This triad makes up the incorporeal Monad, which is distinguished from matter, called the Dyad.

CHAPTER THREE

NEO-PLATONISM AND ITS AUTHORS

1. *The Origins of the School*

We now leave aside the discussion of neo-Platonism's precursors in favour of a discussion of its founders and authors. However, we immediately encounter a great problem regarding the personage of Ammonius Saccas, the founder of the school, who lived in the times of the Emperor Commodus (180–192 A.D.). and whose personality has still not been clearly defined. It is known that he lived in Alexandria, but he lived an abscure life. The name "Saccas" or "porter" raises the first doubts. How could a porter have founded so important a cultural movement? Accordingly E. Seeberg ("Ammonius Sakkas", in Zeit f. Kirchengeschichte 61, 1941, pp. 136–170) proposes that the concealed meaning of the word "Sakkas" was the Indian word "Sakhya", as Buddha was the Sakhya Muni. It is not improbable that Buddhist monks lived in Alexandria, as we see in the history of the Maurya Indian Empire (fourth-first centuries B.C.) and from the eulogistic mention of Buddha made by Clement of Alexandria.

However, this is only one difficulty; a greater debate regards the truth of the sources. Eusebius of Caesarea states that Ammonius was a Christian, and he vociferously rejects Porphyry's statement that Ammonius returned to paganism from Christianity. Hence two opinions: a) that there were two personages named Ammonius, one Christian and one pagan. The latter would have been the true teacher of Plotinus, while the former would be a great scholar to be identified with the Pseudo-Dionysius (C. Elorduy); b) there was only one Ammonius, and he was pagan. Therefore, Eusebius of Caesarea was deceived, and he confused the founder of neo-Platonism with another, unknown individual.[546] Still, there is more to be debated.

News concerning Ammonius' doctrine have come to us from Hierocles of Alexandria and Bishop Nemesius of Emesa. However, both lived in the fifth century; and hence the attempts (such as F. Heinemann's in 1926) to reconstruct the thought of a philosopher who wrote nothing are debatable. The following hypothesis seems acceptable: on a Judeo-Christian foundation (especially that of Philo), Ammonius connected the Prime Principle with matter through the emanation performed by the "dynamis". Instead, Plotinus, working from strictly Hellenic categories, substituted the concept of "procession" ("próodos") for that of emanation.[547]

Ammonius had three favourite students: Origen (who should be distinguished from the Christian theologian from Alexandria bearing the same name), Herennius and Plotinus. The latter, born in Lycopolis (Egypt) in 204–205, came to Alexandria in 232, at the age of 28. Here he met Ammonius, with whom he stayed until he was 39 years of age. After 11 years as a disciple, he decided to travel to Persia and India to learn eastern wisdom, following the Roman armies which in 243 moved toward Mesopotamia to attack the Persians. The expedition was disastrous, and Plotinus barely saved himself and retreated to Antioch. He did not return to Alexandria, perhaps because Ammonius was dead, and travelled to Rome, where he opened a philosophical school in 244. This school enjoyed the favour of the Imperial court; hence Rome became the centre of neo-Platonism's foundation.

For ten years all those who desired to hear his lectures gathered together in his study: senators, young Christian apostates, Gnostics, and even spiritists. Even the empress Salonina, Gallienus' wife, admired the philosopher's mildness, reserve and candor. Among his first diciples was Amelius of Etruria, who twenty years later founded a neo-Platonic school in Apamaea in Syria. However, Amelius modified the doctrine of his teacher, introducing the doctrine of the three hypostatic intellects, thus opening the way for the school's dissolution.

In 263 Porphyry (233–305, named Malchus in Phoenician), a native of Tyre, arrived in Rome. After having attended in Caesarea in Palestine the lessons of Origen in the Christian "didaskaleion", he traveled to Athens to study with Longinus Cassius, a Middle Platonic with ties to Plotinus. Porphyry exhorted Plotinus to continue giving lessons, which he had begun to write in 254. When Plotinus (by that time in poor health) retired to Campania, Plotinus' writings passed into the hands of Porphyry. Porphyry organised them by following the Pythagorean criterion according to which the number nine is perfect (hence the Enneads, six treatises each containing nine chapters), and another criterion belonging to Andronicus of Rhodes (used for Aristotle's works) to divide the material into four themes: ethics, physics, psychology and metaphysics. He perhaps went against Plotinus' ideas (III, 93).

Plotinus died of an intestinal illness in the villa of the senator Castricius in 270 at Minturnum at the age of 66. He never realised his project of "Platonopolis", a city in honour of Plato to be constructed near Naples with an almost monastic constitution.[548]

2. *Introduction to the Enneads*

The arguments considered in the treatise are: the *First Ennead*, with an ethical character (man, virtue, dialectics, happiness, etc.); the *Second Ennead*, with physical themes (the world, movement, the stars, the two matters, act and potency, etc.); the *Third Ennead*, with problems related to physics (fate, Providence, the individual demon, love, etc.); the *Fourth Ennead*, with psychological themes (the soul, its essence, the senses, immortality, the descent of the soul into the body, etc.); the *Fifth Ennead*, with metaphysical questions (thought, the three hypostases, the "procession" of the hypostases, the ideas, etc.); and, the *Sixth Ennead*, a continuation of his metaphysics (numbers, good, the ideas, freedom, the hypostases).

Reading the *Enneads* gives the impression of a marvellous mosaic, constructed piece by piece with fragments taken from other sources. Plotinus created his grand design by borrowing freely from all the Greek classics: Parmenides, Heraclitus, and above all Plato and Aristotle.[546] In addition to these authors, which make up the essential background of the *Enneads*, Plotinus also made use of the Stoic and neo-Pythagorean doctrines of Numenius,[550] Severus, Chronius, Gaius and Atticus, as well as those of the peripatetics Aspasius, Alexander of Aphrodisias and Adrastus. However, all this does not mean that the appropriation was a sequence of quotes or reviews. No, this was an appropriation which in some cases transfigured the source itself. For example, Parmenides' identity between being and thought is applied to the relation between the first and second hypostasis, not in reference to the Eleatic metaphysical principle of being-thought-word.

He rejected some of Aristotle's theses, such as the doctrine of "thought of thought" in God (VI, 7, 37), the definition of soul as "entelechia" (VI, E, 85), the theory of the fifth essence (II, 1, 8) and the theory of the categories (VI, 1, 3).

His position on Plato is complex. Willy Theiler finds the question arduous, insofar as Plotinus used not only the works of the Athenian master, but also the Stoic interpretations of Antiochus of Ascalon, and even the Platonic Stoicism of Poseidonius of Apamaea. Theiler concludes that the Plato found in Plotinus is "dimidiatus": Platonic politics are absent, and the *Republic* and *Laws* appear only incidentally in reference to ethical themes, not political ones. Moreover, the Socratic spirit of dialogue is lacking, educational interests are absent . . . philosophy and life become a monologue. It is true that the *Republic* is sometimes quoted outside the ethical context, with a particular emphasis on Good. However, in this case the reference has a metaphysical value, not a political one. The *Timaeus* is used in an allegorical sense against the Gnostics' delirium. The story of the priestess Diothyma on the sense and value of the "eros" is not taken in relation to a theory of corporeal love, which ascends to the level of ideal love, but as an initiation to the grades of the intelligible order.

In short, Plato is spiritualised and transformed within the grandiose framework of the system's unity.[551]

Nor is Plotinus' appropriation eclectic. On the contrary, the new meaning given the parts taken from the repertoire of previous philosophy, especially from Middle Platonism, neo-Pythagoreanism and Philo (*Life*, 14, 17) makes Plotinus' philosophical system one of the most significant and original, not a step below those of Spinoza, Hegel and Bergson.

Nor is it acceptable to imply that the variety of religious sources make his a syncretistic thought. Plotinus remains rooted in the "humus" of Hellenic religious thought, a fact demonstrated by his polemics with the Gnostics.

A decisive question is about *the method* of Plotinian philosophy. Plotinus expressly calls it "dialectic' (I, 3, 4). This means that he did not intend to modify the Platonic method, which is a precise declaration on his part (II, 9, 9). And yet, his intention does not correspond to the facts. First of all, he excludes Aristotelian demonstration, because "it abandons to another art the so-called logic which is based on premises and syllogisms" (I, 3, 4).[552]

The Plotinian method does not aim to demonstrate anything. Therefore, it does not pretend to place itself at the service of a "science" in the strict sense (VI, 2, 3).

Second, Plotinian "dialectics" are not the same as Plato's ascending dialectics. It is true that Plotinus refers to Plato when he states, "In fact, after having arrested his error for sensible things, [the mind] fixes itself in the intelligible, and here its activity finishes, detaching itself from falsehood and nourishing the soul, as Plato says, 'in the plain of truth'. The mind uses the Platonic method of division for the discernment of the species, to say what they are, to arrive at the first days" (I, 3, 4). Therefore, this is not an ascent from one idea to another, but as soon as it surpasses the senses, the mind does not move from idea to idea. There is not "diédoxos" (exit), and there is no "diaíresis", if by "diaíresis" we intend the spatial passages of discourse between the ideas. The mind does not move through process, but through possession; it makes the implicit explicit. Just as I describe the parts of an automobile I am looking at without diminishing its unity, so Plotinus states that philosophy is not a passage from the known to the unknown, but a resolution in the parts of what is a whole "ab aeterno".

Another example: I may contemplate a mosaic in its unity. Then I can examine a particular stone, without losing sight of the totality (VI, 2, 3).

A disconcerting aspect of this method of resolution is that time is not taken into consideration. As G. Capone Braga observes, " . . . if time disappears and eternity remains, causes tend to be substituted by reason, and the causal and temporal explanation is replaced by the logical one",[553] or simple intuitive description. Moreover, the resolution is cyclical and concentric; in thinking of the hypotheses, thought remains identical to itself and does not disperse itself in them (IV, 3, 4); it articulates, but it does not alienate itself in them. It goes to and returns from them. The idea is the limit of the intellect, and the intellect is the movement of the idea, just as in thinking of a single stone I think of the whole mosaic, and in thinking of the mosaic I think of the stone. Hence the means is the end, and vice versa. The terminus of this process is ecstasy.

3. *The Plotinian System: The "Procession" in General*

The originality which must be recognised in Plotinus is the grandiose system of all, philosophical knowledge: theology, physics, metaphysics, logic, ethics and mystics. Everything is collected and welded together in Plotinian dialectics. This organic nature, as we said earlier, only finds its match in modern times in Hegel's and Bergson's philosophy (Bergson considered Plotinus the greatest of the ancient thinkers).

The system derives from the profound unity pervading the one and the many, and vice versa.

The fundamental question is this: what is the connection between intelligible and sensible reality; between the ideal world and the sensible world? This is the question posed by Parmenides, Plato and Aristotle; but Plotinus gives it a response. First of all, creation is excluded, in agreement with the Greek mentality. All visible and invisible reality is one and eternal, even if it is reflected in many things. However, plurality is apparent and provisory (VI, 5,5), just as a circle or sphere is dynamically bound to its luminous centre (VI, 2, 10; VI, 4, 7) or to a point in which everything is gathered (VI, 5, 11).

Plotinus takes recourse to an array of dazzling examples: a well which gives forth into a thousand rivers, a circulatory vein in an immense tree, a light which radiates without extinguishing itself, a perfume which invades without dissipating. Therefore, everything lives in the One; and the "One" is in everything, through an internal communication which is not purely imitative, but vital and efficient (VI, 4, 10). Just as the well and the sun are everything in everything without confusing themselves with anything, so the One is in things, but distinct from them.

Nevertheless, between the One and the all there is a difference which is neo-Pythagorically covered by intermediaries. Therefore, although he states that in distant participation the participant does not become property of the participated (VI, 4, 8), nonetheless communion of the One with the sensible world is not immediate. In fact, the superior or intelligible world is composed of three "hypostases", which are impersonal natures and not autonomous persons. They are the One, the universal Intellect and the cosmic soul, compared respectively to the sun, light and the moon.

Being is communicated from the One to the Intellect and from the Intellect to the Soul. From here it degrades through emanation into the inferior souls and to the limits of the material world. Then begins the steps of the great return or conversion ("epistrophé") toward the One; this takes place in real way, not a symbolic one (as in Philo).[554]

The descending or "processional" process implies multiplication, degradation and analogy, not univocity (VI, 2, 2). The ascending process on the contrary, implies intensification and purification. However, it should be repeated that ascending, descending, exiting, returning, etc. are metaphors expressing the single life of being and thought.

Let us describe these phrases.

4. *The Procession of the Hypostases*

The One comes before the many in ontological dignity, but not in temporal order, because if the One is "ab aeterno", then the multiple is "ab aeterno". Because of this ontological property, the One is potency, principle and origin ("pegé") from which everything proceeds and to which everything returns; it is the principle and end of the universe. It is called King, Good, Monad, Prime, All, God. It is not being in the proper sense because it is beyond all categories. Therefore, it is formed and modeled after the neo-Pythagorean categories of the super-categorical One. Its solitude ("moné") is broken in the "procession" ("próodos") of the many, which is similar to it and has a nostalgia for it. Plotinus describes its freedom, unity and absolute transcendence in this way. *It is free* because it is Good, and hence it exists through an original choice. The free act of its will constitutes it in its existence (VI, 8, 13), so that it freely wishes itself with a freedom that is also necessity for itself and for the many. *It is One*, because it excludes every duality, including the duality inherent to the subject and object of intelligence. Therefore, it is neither intelligent nor intelligible, and hence it is necessary to exclude its self-consciousness, its thinking of self (anti-Aristotelian polemics), the knowledge of the many, and its own intelligibility o. thinkable essence. With Plato, Plotinus reaffirms that the One is above being and thought.

Divine transcendence is affirmed by Plotinus by way of eminence. The One is super-form, super-good, super-mind (VI, 9, 5); it is ineffable. Therefore, when one speaks of it, one must use "as if". It is more accessible in its vestiges or consequent realities than in itself (negative theology).

The second hypostasis is the *Intellect* or Spirit,[555] described according to the Aristotelian model of the divine "noûs". It is the god ("theós") who proceeds from the One through eternal filiation, just as a light does which is not posterior to the sun. Eternal generation gives the intellect a divine infinity; but, it is infinite insofar as it is defined. Indeed, it proceeds from the One, and the One is brimming with its fullness, while the One remains indeterminate.

The Intellect is primarily being and not thought. If it were primarily thought, then from it "thinkables" without being would come from it. With respect to the One, the intellect is the image and paradigm of the One ("eikòn", "skiá", "íchnos"). Therefore, its first act is a form of present science without past and future, without reasonings and predictions. However, then its thought is identified with its being; he is the first being and the first thought, the idea itself (V, 9, 8).

With respect to inferior reality, it contains within itself all the ideas; it is the "kósmos noetós". Having overcome Platonic idealism (Thinking Thought or Demiurge, and thought or Ideas), Plotinus and Numenius took a step forward in the direction of Christian theology. The "ideal pleroma", called "tò autozôon", is not the absolute found in Plato's *Timaeus*, but all is contained in the intellect. However, this should not be understood as if the ideal pleroma were to have a creative or constructive dependence from the Intellect. The intellect and the intelligibles coincide through an eternal reciprocal connection, insofar as the thinkable (as Plotinus clarifies) is intrinsic to the intelligible.[556]

Therefore, the intellect is not the Aristotelian "nóesis" which thinks only of itself, but thinking the intelligibles is essential to it. The intelligibles do not derive from the One, but they are its rays (V, 3, 12). Therefore, they do not exist because the intellect thinks them, but the intellect thinks them because they are, "ab aeterno" (VI, 6, 7; 7–9). The intelligibles or ideas are distinct from one another as that "what" is from the "why", insofar as they are paradigms of reality ("what") and insofar as they are principles ("why") (VI, 7, 2).[557] Their difference is not only one of species, but also one of number. The idea of a man with a pug nose exists, and the idea of Socrates exists. Contrary to classical tradition, Plotinus states that the fear of violating an ancient principle was unfounded. One did not have to be fearful of admitting the existence of individual ideas, or even their infinity ("apeiría"), since, although they always remain intelligible, one is subordinate to another in the form of a pyramid beneath the Intellect.[558] They are so present that the Intellect does not "think how" to create them, since any reflection ("boulé") would imply imperfection. Therefore, it does not deliberate, does not reflect ("epinôesai"), does not predict; such a concept would be anthropomorphic. Nevertheless, once the ideas are organised within its thought ("theoria"), then it has providence over them.[559] When the intelligibles become worldly things, the Intellect is their cause, just as the lamp causes light and the light causes shadow.

5. *The Degrading "Procession"*

The principle that the intellect contemplates ("theorêi") the particular intelligibles is the glue for the continuity, but also for the degradation of being. If there exist intelligible numbers in the Intellect, along with the ideas of living beings, their organs, or fire, of intelligible matter,[560] and of all sensible reality, then each of these ideas must have something corresponding to it in the inferior world. Out of pure faithfulness to Plato, Plotinus states (referring to the *Parmenides*) that there are no ideas of filth, dirtiness or works of art in matter (painting, architecture, rhetoric, politics, etc. – this latter point was inserted out of faithfulness to Plato's *Republic*).

The mediation between ideas existent in the Intellect and real things is performed by the Soul, which is generated "ab aeterno" by the Intellect because (as Plotinus states) what is eternally perfect generates eternally. The cosmic Soul generates time, but time does not lie outside of it because time makes up its very life (IV, 4, 15). Under time, it produces the "similar [but not identical] to self: the gods, the souls (subject to metempsychosis but generated "ab aeterno"), the sensible world (which existed neither before or after the generating action of the Soul – it also exists "ab aeterno"). The Soul is everything in all material reality, but it is also distinct from material reality, as seeing and hearing are in man. The Soul possesses a threefold creative and ontopoietic perspective: *observing* the Intellect, the Soul expresses it and becomes its "lógos" (II, 2, 16). *Observing* itself, it places itself in being. *Observing* the world it becomes nature, and it generates and preserves nature through the "rationes seminales". Therefore, it is "the interpreter of the second hypostasis" (VI, 3, 11). However, the nature which derives from it is only a shadow of the Soul; its conjunction with matter generates a similar being, a dream, a mirage.

A difficult problem presents itself in the course of Plotinus' reflection: how does prime matter derive from the Soul? He debates two opposing versions, one negative and one positive. In the *negative perspective*, matter is non-being, a deception, a restless aspiration to be incorporeal. It is impossible, lacking form, simple privation, absolute indigence, indeterminacy, evil, deformation, darkness, irrationality, the "shadow of reason and fall of thought" (VI, 3, 7). Plotinus states that it cannot even give being, as the origin from which things are born. In the *positive perspective*, it is not absolute non-being, but only that which is different from being (I, 8, 3), an obscure zone of being (VI, 3, 7), that which is different from the One (VI, 5, 8), that which is different from Good (III, 2, 5). Here is evident the unsurpassed dualism of an intelligible or "logical" matter united with the One and a sensible or real matter which is the principle of evil (Zoroastrianism?), the total deficiency of good (I, 8, 5).

To conclude this exposition of the degrading process, we observe that:

a) It is said that Plotinian pantheism distinguishes itself from illusory Indian pantheism, from Spinoza's modal pantheism, from monistic Brunian pantheism, and from dialectic Hegelian pantheism, because of "procession" or emanation. The "procession" – as Plotinus himself clarifies (VI, 5, 5) – must be correctly understood: it is not a temporal or spatial process (VI, 4, 11), since the universe is eternal, but it is also "other-ness" (VI, 4, 4) which disappears into infinity during the degrading process. Inferior spatial reality tends to be absorbed in its being into the ideal being, just as ideal being is absorbed into the One. "It is not possible . . . that the being be non-being; indeed, in any case, non-being is in being" (VI, 4, 2). In the strict sense, there is no space for the subordination of non-being to being, because Plotinus insists on describing emanation almost as an absorption of the emanated into the emanator. The "everywhere" means "in being" and "in itself" (VI, 4, 2).

b) Plotinus does not admit creation, either by God, who is the necessary emanating principle, or by inferior beings, which are as perfect as the One in their eternal duration and totality and are not contingent.

c) Also excluded is the forming function of the Platonic Demiurge, because matter is described in the *Timaeus* as a pre-existent, but not emanating principle, contrary to Plotinus' description. The contradictions of this pantheism arise from the method, which anticipate Hegelian panlogism and are based on the Pythagorean and Stoic principle of the absolute continuity ("synécheia") and unity of the universe.

6. *The Return ("Ephistrophé"): Anthropology*

The Plotinian universe, as we have described it, is unified: a perfect and eternal life in which multiplicity is governed by Unity, albeit in its perennial rise and fall. From the One constantly shine rays of light, which arrives the farthest edges of the matter. This is the "apostasy" from the One (VI, 6, 1), an ontological dissipation which nostalgically aspires to the One, as darkness in search of light, evil in tension toward Good. However, this return ("epistrophé") is not possible for matter and bodies, because they are incapable of interiority. Of all the corporeal beings inferior to the hypostatic triad, only man can free himself of matter, free himself in spirit, and make a break with evil and ignorance.

Plotinian anthropology unveils the meaning and sense of this emancipation; it is more Orphic than Stoic or Aristotelian.

Although man is "tò synámpho", a composition of body and soul, he is man through his soul and insofar as he has a soul: "kaì ánthropos he anthròpou psyché" (III, 5, 5).

The soul is not fallen (as Plotinus vigorously states against the Gnostics) in the body but manifests itself at a certain moment in the body as the echo of a single voice in various places through its descent from the cosmic Soul. This is a descent which is simultaneously necessary and free ("hakoúsios", "hekoúsios"), and hence it makes up an innateness ("symphytos") with the body, albeit not in an essential way. The presence of the soul in the body is existential,[561] or better, "eventistic", because if it is true that the body participates in the soul, then the soul can exist without the body. Even when the soul lives in the body, it is not all submerged in matter ("ou pâsa hédu") (IV, 8, 8); but a part of it remains with the intelligible world and is not attracted by bodily pleasures (V, 1, 10). Therefore, the body is the "chain" of the soul (II, 9, 7) and hence only touches the soul "with its extreme margin" (IV, 3, 20), even if the "body is in the soul" (V, 5, 9).

There is an apostasy of the body from the soul when the body is recalcitrant; but there is an apostasy of the soul from God when it becomes fascinated by the desire for individuality and singularity, desires a body and leaves heaven. This is a metaphysical guilt, not a moral one.

When the soul enters the body, the soul possesses purely vegetative functions ("physis"), later evolving toward more elevated forms of existence through sensitive life ("aísthesis"). It further develops, without qualitative jumps, through intellectual life ("noûs"). The intellective soul is also called the "superior soul"; it is our "ego". Plotinus states, "The 'I' ['hemeîs'] is the true man who aspires to virtue; the composition ['tò Koinón'] is the body which does not wish to be a body, and hence is discord" (V, 4, 20). The soul makes use of the body (VI, 7, 5). The three types of soul are manifested in the three human types: vegetative (Epicurean), rational animals (Stoics) the wise men and philosopher (Ulixes). From this psychological order detaches itself a metaphysical division. There are three "men": the ideal, the real and the imaginary (of painting or sculpture). The first is the most real because he possesses not only the "what", but also the "why". The second is sensible, form and essence "in" matter (VI, 7, 5). Only the first, which is not totally submerged in matter, can aspire to salvation and to being what he is (VI, 7, 31).

7. *The Ways of Return*

Plotinian anthropology helps us understand the central theme of neo-Platonic philosophy, the salvation of the soul. This salvation is understood not in the Christian sense, as if the return were a gift of grace from on High, but in a purely human sense as an escape from the world, liberation from the body, a re-ascent to the origins which can be performed with human efforts alone.

These efforts are expressed in three paths: the moral path, the aesthetic path, and the dialectic path. Man saves himself with the exercise of the virtues, with an initiation to beauty and love, with the use of cognitive faculties. The three ways lead to the final act, which for Plotinus is ecstasy, in agreement with all neo-Pythagorean and neo-Platonic thought.

The first way is that of virtue; however, observe that the Plotinian "areté" is not Socratic or Platonic-Aristotelian. For Socrates, virtue is a difficult effort, menaced by the passions, for the best man in the "polis". Ethics is better articulated in Plato and Aristotle, as perfection realised within the State and it has the goal of "eudaimonia", or terrestrial happiness. For Plotinus, man must be an optimist, because he possesses all the forces needed to reach the One. In fact, virtue is not an interior ascetics, but a physical energy to be awakened. Not even prayer is necessary. Plotinus says, "On the subject of prayers, do not believe that there is a Will who can fulfill them" (IV, 4, 40; see also III, 2, 8: the winner is the one who struggles, not the one who prays. On the contrary—V, 8, 9). In our work of liberation, we do not depend on the stars, or on fate, since these are extrinsic energies. They are like rocks thrown against us, but not within us (III, 1, 3). Nor can one speak of fortune, which belongs to multiplicity and not to Good, which is the principle.[562] Liberation does not have a spatial or historical-temporal meaning (VI, 4, 16), but expresses an intentional and affective, interior and gradual redemption from the body, which is like an unchained and shouting mob, a phantasm which creates spectra to obstruct "salvation" ("sotería").[563]

It is interesting to observe that Plotinus uses the four-part division of the virtues, but he intensified their content according to the various grades of ascent. Justice, fortitude, prudence and temperance are properties of the soul, which, so to speak, gradually change colour and intensity as the soul retreats from the sensible world. With synthetic expressions, we could say that the virtues function "ad extra", "ad intra", or "supra".

Therefore, the outline is as follows:

Cardinal virtues "ad extra": those virtues which do not lead directly to God, but are useful for the common good of civil society. Therefore, they do not have wisdom, and their essence is action ("praxis") and not contemplation ("theoria"). Better said, the "praxis" is an accessory, or weakness ("asthéneia") of contemplation ("theoria"). Hence prudence frees us "ad extra" from false opinions, etc.

Cardinal virtues "ad intra": are the same four virtues, which purify within; these are the superior virtues (I, 2, 4). Here temperance liberates the soul "from within" in a victory against the passions; prudence frees us from the uncertainty of the soul; justice makes the soul ready against egoism; etc. In other words, at this level the cardinal virtues are more mental states than temporal praxis.

Cardinal virtues "supra": these are the four virtues considered as functions of the ideas. Hence they are also called paradigmatic virtues because they are not habits acquired during the development of the praxis, but are paradigms intuited in the ideal world. In one text, Plotinus states, " . . . to be temperate consists of an internal turning toward the Intellect; fortitude is the impassability to similarity of that for which one aims, which is impassable by nature . . . " (VI, 9, 11).

The second way of return is aesthetics, of the contemplation of beauty under the stimulus of love ("eros"). In this doctrine, Plotinus succeeds admirably in combining Platonic aesthetic doctrine (especially that of the *Symposium*) with the Aristotelian doctrine of beauty as form immersed in matter. Platonic transcendence, performed by the "eros", through which one ascends step by step from external beauty toward the supreme Beauty, presupposes the Aristotelian immanence of beauty as the splendour of the form imprisoned by the matter (VI, 7, 22). If there is a subsistent form freed from the matter, then this is sovereign Beauty; this is the Intellect. Therefore, the soul's itinerary to ascend is that of the Diothyma. The coerced beauty of the forms cannot satiate the "eros" of the human soul, which aspires to a true form. An arcane desire, a celestial passion frees the soul from the corporeal forms of seeing (lovers), hearing (music). These corporeal forms are vestiges of a sovereign beauty, and they are capable of leading to higher forms, because "beauty lies upward" (V, 8, 13). Hence the soul ascends from mortal and ephemeral beauty, stimulated by the "eros" toward the Beauty of the Intellect. However, the One is above all beauty ("hyperkalón").[564]

And so, we have a process similar to the moral one. The soul is first pierced "ad extra" by a sensible beauty (lovers in the visible form, musician in the acoustic form), which stimulates it to see an "intra" beauty which rests behind physical forms. This is the beauty of beautiful works and of beautiful customs. However, in the third stage the soul internally sees a Beauty unfold "above itself". "Contemplate yourself!"; and within yourself you will find beauty, the kind which rains down from above. At that point all amorous tension will end and the Soul will mystically unite with the One.

The third way of ascent is dialectics, a cognitive program analogous to the moral and aesthetic ones. One begins with sensible knowledge, which is "doxa" (or sensation, memory and experience). This is a contact with "exterior" appearances ("ad extra"). The second step is discursive knowledge, which is expressed in dialectics and logic. And so, it is called "to logistikón" or "dianoia", because it ends with science, which still contains sensory images. However, these images already have as their object the intelligibles resting within the soul ("Ouk exo nôu tà noetá" – V, 1, 4). In this respect, there is no need to verify knowledge through comparisons with external things. On the contrary, things are expressed not as they are in themselves, but as they are in the Intellect. The "logistikón", or interior discourse, is called "intermediate" by Plotinus ("tò méson"), insofar as it is the intermediate phase between sensibility and final intuition (II, 2, 9).

While lovers and musicians elevate themselves to Beauty through ephemeral beauty, philosophers are already "winged", because "from the beginning they are already prepared to gather the incorporeal through dialectics" (cfr. I, 3, 3), which is "the most noble attitude within us which occupies itself with Being, and with Him who is most noble. And as it is wisdom, it occupies itself with Being, and as a spirit, it considers Him who is above being" (I, 3, 5): the One.[565]

8. *Conclusion*

The Plotinian program of virtue, aesthetic contemplation and dialectics ends with ecstasy, which is a possession through sympathy and without vision in a hyper-rational experience and an absorption into the One. Plotinus explains that, just as he who enters into the temple first observes the sacred images but in his advance abandons them to unite mystically with the god (VI, 9, 11), so the three itineraries proceed through the praxis and theory and end with a union transcending all human language.

This Plotinian synthesis contains an unstable equilibrium between Greek rationalism and eastern religious dynamism. Some of the results of this synthesis are positive: a systematic exposition, the organic harmony of all elements taken from classical philosophy, and a notable harmony between speculative and religious requirements. It would suffice to provoke a slight disturbance in this balance, which would also provoke new perspectives on the One and the many, the superior world and its inferior counterpart. This we see in the work of slow dissolution performed by Plotinus' followers. Hence in the ancient world we see two divergent lines: Christianity, born a religion, seeks a philosophy and a theology; and later paganism, having established itself as a philosophy, slowly transforms itself into religion. This reaction was useless against the victorious advance of Christianity, and it was also damaging to philosophy.

The first to unknowingly lead to the. its dissolution was Porphyry, the teacher's favourite disciple.

CHAPTER FOUR

LATER NEO-PLATONISTS

1. *Introduction*

Based on the outline proposed in number part V, Ch. 3, n. 2, Porphyry (233–305), should be studied in a chapter entitled "authors", similar to the preceding one. In reality, Porphyry, as W. Theiler demonstrated, although he edited the works of his master (according to his own Hellenistic scheme) detaches himself from Plotinus in his own writings, such as *The Descent of the Soul*, *Letter to Anebus*, *The Cavern of the Nymphs*, and *Life of Pythagoras*.[566] Undoubtedly he belongs to the school of Syria and Athens. He has the speculative tendency of neo-Platonism,[567] but he impressed an anthropological direction in the place of a metaphysical one, giving the soul's salvation and human will a central position in his system. The points of divergence from his teacher are: a) being extends itself from the One to the matter, which is falsehood, error and evil, but is still a being; b) every being is defined by a form ("eidos"). In this sense, insofar as it is form, it is good, but as degradation it is evil; c) there are three values mediating between the peak and the base: dignity ("axia"), order ("taxis") and the harmony of grades ("syntaxis"); d) the superior Soul, although it possesses dignity, order and harmony, can become evil and decay; e) the Soul which loses its grade ("syntaxis") detaches itself from the One and becomes impotent.

At this point it is necessary to mention the various schools which, through their connection to Plotinus, proposed revisions and interpretations of neo-Platonism: *the speculative school of Athens*, a true university with Scholarchs (nine of them: Plutarch, Syrianus, Donninus, Proclus, Marinus, Isidore, Zenodotus, Damascius and Simplicius), *the theurgic school of Pergamus* (founded by Edesius, a disciple of Iamblichus, followed by Maximus, Chrysanthus, Priscus, Eusebius, and the future emperor Julian the Apostate), and *the erudite school of Alexandria* (Theon, his daughter Hypatia, Synesius Bishop of Cyrene, Hierocles, Aeneas, Hermias, Ammonius, John Philiponus, Olympiodorus, David and Elias). However, we should always keep in mind the original order of doctrinal genealogy:

PLOTINUS
PORPHYRY
IAMBLICHUS

2. *Iamblichus and the School of Athens*

Iamblichus was a Syrian, born in Chalcides between 245 and 250 and died in 330. He was the inheritor of Porphyry's thought, not through teaching but by reading Porphyry's works. It is probably true that Iamblichus, who lived in Alexandria, only met Porphyry in Athens. It is a known fact that neo-Pythagoreans and peripatetics also flowered in the lively cultural environment of the Egyptian city.

At a certain point, Iamblichus broke his ties to Porphyry; we do not know whether this took place in Athens, or later in Alexandria. In the times of the emperors Galerius and maxentius (305–312) he returned to Syria, where he opened a school of philosophy in Daphne, near Antioch. He wrote a great deal, and the following complete works have been preserved: *Protrepticus*, *De Communi mathematica scientia*, *In Nichomachi Arithmeticam Introductionem*, *De Mysteriis*, *Vita Pythagorae*. However, we know that he also published numerous commentaries on Plato and Aristotle, of which little has been preserved. We also have some passages or quotes of his, which B. Darlsgaard Larsen diligently gathered in his appendix to *Jamblique de Chalcis exégète et philosophe*, *Testimonia et fragmenta exegetica* (1972). This was also done by J. M. Dillon (*Jamblichi Chalcidensis in Platonis dialogos commentariorum fragmenta*, Leyden 1975).

It is difficult to ascertain the relations between Amelius of Apamaea and Iamblichus, both Syrian teachers of neo-Platonism. Perhaps Theodorus of Asine, a disciple of Iamblichus, was an intermediary. One thing is certain: Iamblichus, a Syrian, avid reader of the *Chaldaic Oracles*, and dedicated to theurgy, decisively transformed Plotinus' harmonic edifice, multiplying the hypostases and eons. In this fashion he hoped to reconcile philosophy with pagan religion and furnish a theological justification for contemporary polytheism. There is also the theurgic component, which Plotinus (at least overtly) did not admit and which Porphyry rejected at the certain point of his life. Iamblichus sanctioned this aspect as a liturgical praxis in his philosophical-theological system. Hence he arrived at the affirmation that union with the gods does not depend on sole human forces (as Plotinus taught), but that union is also a divine gift obtained through theurgic practice. Iamblichus' outline is as follows:

INEFFABLE ONE
CATEGORIAL ONE
INTELLIGIBLE WORLD INTELLIGENT WORLD
Father-Prime-Potency-First Intellect Second Second Third
Intellect Potency Intelligence
FOURTH INTELLECT
SOUL
First Soul or Supercosmic Soul First Cosmic Soul Second
Cosmic Soul
SENSIBLE WORLD
Superior World Man World
(Gods, Angels, Demons, Heroes)

Iamblichus' successor, Theodorus of Asine, left out the

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theurgic aspect and modified the triad of the intelligent world by replacing the Second Intellect, Second Potency and Third Intellect with three spiritual functions or divine values: being, thought and living. Hence he was a prelude to Proclus' theology. However, along with Theodorus ended the School of Iamblichus in Daphne. The disciple Edesius moved to Pergamus, where he opened a school which also had a moment of glory, when the young imperial prince Julian came there, choosing as his teachers Maximus and Chrysanthus. Also connected with the school were Libanius, a famous writer and rhetorician (313–393) and Sallustius, who in 361 was appointed by the young Emperor prefect of the Eastern Empire and collaborated in the restoration of paganism. Maximus gave neo-Platonism an even stronger theurgic character, to the point where his philosophy became a theosophy. There is little to say about the documents of Julian and Sallustius; they remain documents of a convulsive era and an unsure perspective.

The Athenian school fared differently; here pagans and Christians lived together in a show of the ancient and lost glory. The environment was not dominated by politics (as was the case in Constantinople), and culture was the last claim to nobility that the city had.

The Academy was not restored after 86 B.C. The Peripatetic School and the Garden of the Epicureans were decayed or destroyed. However, around the years 380–430 a certain Plutarch (died 432) established a true neo-Platonic school, which in some aspects brought to mind the teachings of Iamblichus, or "theoresis" and theurgy. He was succeeded by the Aristotelian Syrianus, whose commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* has been partially preserved. In the wake of Syrianus, the third Scholarch, Proclus (born in Constantinople in 412 and died in Athens in 485) continued the school's development, although he far surpassed his predecessors. He wrote prolifically; of his 50 works, 20 have been preserved. The most significant is the *Elementatio theologica*, with a compendium entitled "De causis" that was commented on by

St. Thomas Aquinas. Other interesting works are *In Platonis Theologiam*, some commentaries on Plato, various essays, poems, etc.

Emperor Julian was imposing the cult of "Sol invictus" as the intermediary between the intelligible world and the sensible world. At the same time there were the cults of Attis, the saviour Asclepius, which were opposed to Jesus. Also, the allegoric cults of the Great Mothers of the Gods and the goddess Cibeles, were continuing to battle the Christians (called "Galileans") with Julian's help. Meanwhile, in Athens, with its glorious past and old pretences, Proclus limited itself to elaborating complex emanational theories. He worked from the threefold way of access to divinity – myth, philosophy and faith – through the exercise of fantasy and reason, and with ecstasy. Within the divine world he established a triadic rhythm which encompasses the link between emanator and emanated as a law a circular process among realities; the phases are permanence ("móne"), the "procession ("próodos") and the return ("epistrophé"). Between the ineffable one and the intellect he places infinite Henad, which correspond to the superior gods. In the intelligible world (in addition to Iamblichus' second intelligible world, he adds a third intelligible-intellectual world) he places the inferior gods, among them Chronus, Rea, Zeus and three divinities for the intelligible world: Minerva, Proserpina and Mars; etc. A particular three-part division also regulates the world of the souls: divine, demonic and human. The human psychic world consists of sense, reason and intellect. The return is realised through a triadic rhythm: love ("eros"), truth ("as intuition or "alétheia") and Faith ("pístis").

The influence of this school was felt in the Christian environment as well, since the mystical work De divinis Nominibus, quoted in 532 by the Bishop Innocent of Maronia, partly reflects Proclus' theological thought.

After Proclus there came other Scholarchs, such as Marinus of Neapolis of Samaria (Sichem). After having repudiated the faith of Moses, he embraced pagan neo-Platonism and accentuated its mysticism. There followed Isidore and Damascius, the last Scholarch. After the closing of the school, Damascius saw fit to move to Persia (ruled by King Chosroes) along with his colleagues (among whom were Simplicius, Aristotle's famous commentator, the grammarian Priscian, etc.). However, he returned home disillusioned and continued teaching privately. Simplicius' intransigent paganism was opposed by John Philiponus, who dedicated himself to Aristotelian exegesis on the Christian model; however, this latter already belonged to the School of Alexandria.

3. *The Alexandrian and the Roman School*

Contrary to Athens, Alexandria did not have a Platonic or neo-Platonic "university".[568] Its glory was the "Musaeum", which was a centre of the scientific, cultural and philosophical culture of its ten centuries of history; this was a type of research centre or institute, supported by the State. The historian Sudas tells us that the first neo-Platonic school was officially opened by Hypatia, daughter and student of the scientist Theon. We should not be surprised at this sudden appearance of neo-Platonism, because, as H. Marrou observes,[569] there was always a continuous exchange of doctrines between Alexandria and Athens and sometimes even a rivalry between their teachers. This is confirmed by Bishop Synesius who, after being Hypatia's student, does not hesitate to condemn the philosophical decadence of the city in a letter from Athens to his brother. This derision extended to the "Plutarchians", to Syrianus and perhaps Proclus.[570]

The climate in Alexandria was completely different from Athens' reactionary conservatism. In Alexandria, cultured pagans enjoyed the respect of Christians. Still, even in Alexandria we encounter examples of religious intolerance. From the life of the Monophysite bishop Severus of Antioch, we know, for example, that a certain Christian convert, named Paralius, derided the great goddess Isides and was lynched by pagan students. Therefore, it is not surprising that Hypatia was murdered by Christians in 425.

However, the general climate in the cultured classes was one of tolerance, or perhaps better stated, religious neutrality. This explains why philosophy continued to be taught in Alexandria after the closing in 529 of the School in Athens. It was precisely in 529 that John of Philiponus, a Christian, published a treatise against Proclus entitled *De aeternitate mundi*. However, his teacher Ammonius (formerly Proclus' student)[571] was a pagan, as was Hierocles (formerly an Athenian disciple of Plutarch, the founder of Athenian neo-Platonism). Hierocles wrote various philosophical works, including *Commentary on the Carmen aureum* and *About Providence, Destiny and the Concordance Between the Freedom of Our Acts and Divine Dominion*.

We note in Hierocles and Ammonius the tendency to eliminate eons and hypostases (thus simplifying the nature of the divine), a return to Middle Platonism, a preference for Aristotelian works, a certain rationalism, and the adoption of Christian doctrines.

Therefore, it is not surprising that some of the pagan teachers had Christian students, such as the Bishop Synesius of Cyrene, baptised as an adult and reluctantly promoted to the episcopacy of Tolemaid. He was a man of culture and prestige, a poet, rhetorician and neo-Platonist. He wrote the volume *Díon* in defence of the Greek "paideia", where he proposes a serene criticism of Coptic monks' excessive austerity and adds a vigorous polemic against theurgists, magicians and hierophants.

He wrote sacred hymns, *De Regno*, and other essays and letters of historical interest.

We also have information about the Alexandrian philosophers from the seventh century (when the philosophy had already become Christian), from Stephanus of Alexandria, who wrote a commentary on Aristotle's *De Interpretatíone*. We also know that in Gaza a decidedly Christian Platonic school existed; but here we are entering into another historical period.

It is also necessary to mention a Roman neo-Platonic school, which scholars have distinguished by studying an obscure thinker named Cornelius Labeon, who continued the teachings of Plato and Porphyry. He detached himself from his two teachers, due to his Roman experiences. Paolo Mastandrea (*Un neoplatismo latino*: *Cornelio Labeone*, Leyden 1979), published a critical edition of his remaining works. Here we find three new passages, from which the scholar concludes that the philosopher represents a point of reference in the so-called anti-Christian pagan rebirth at the end of the fourth century, under the emperors Julian and Eugenius.

Roman neo-Platonism also includes Chalcidius (fourth century), whose commentary on the *Timaeus* was the only source of knowledge of Plato in the Latin Middle Ages. Even more particular is the figure of Marius Victorinus, who converted to Christianity as an adult (fourth century). He translated Porphyry's *Isagoge* and Aristotle's *Categories* into Latin. He also wrote commentaries on Cicero and studied theology. He was Saint Augustine's teacher and colleague.

On the contrary, Vettius Praetextatus (died 384), who wrote a commentary on Aristotle,[572] remained a pagan, as did Macrobius, an elegant Latin writer who was a neo-Platonic commentator of Cicero's Somnium Scipionis. Finally, there were two other Latin masters. First came Martianus Capella (fourth-fifth century), who wrote *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercuri* in the form of a Manippean satire, part prose and part poetry, where he gives precepts for the formation of the seven most important disciplines: the "Trivium" (Grammar, Rhetoric, Dialectics) and the "Quadrivium" (Geometry, Arithmetic, Astronomy and Music). The greatest Roman neo-Platonic was Manlius Severinus Boethius, minister to the Ostrogoth king Theodoric and later executed by that same king. In addition to an extensive amount of Greek translations, he wrote *De consolatione philosophiae*, imitating Cicero and Aristotle, and also studied theology, logic, etc. He belongs to a new historical era, that of Christian philosophy; he is the last Roman, as some correctly state. However, it could be surprising how from Plotinus-Porphyry we can make a leap spanning 50 years to Marius Victorinus, and from St. Augustine we can leap forward to Boethius. The reason seems obvious to me. It has not yet been studies in depth how attentive Rome was in the third through sixth centuries to preserve its tradition of high culture and philosophy. Nor is it valid to refer to an arbitrary episode, such as the "Theodosian renaissance", as Bloch correctly observes. Still remaining to be clarified or discovered is the significance of the rhetorical schools, which continued their work during the cultural renewal.[573]

EPILOGUE

Classical Greco-Roman philosophy is often called Western philosophy, because it was professed in the centres of the Mediterranean basin. Sometimes the adjective is used in a restrictive sense, almost as if today, in a more closely-knit world, it indicates a provincial and non-ecumenical character. In reality, at the conclusion of our long program and taking into consideration the readers of this work, we should rectify this judgement with the following significant facts: a) after Alexander's conquests, philosophical morals were spread to the remote lands Bactriana, at the border with India; b) this philosophy was accepted and developed in later centuries by many Semitic thinkers, or non-Aryan philosophers from Syria, Egypt and Africa; c) when in 529 Justinian ordered the closing of the School of Athens, many teachers were accepted at the court of King Chosroes, where they were to teach Greek philosophy in Persia and translate the masterpieces of Greece into the Iranian language. The failure of this project does not diminish the ecumenical significance of this unhappy voyage.

However, we can also see the subsequent results of this philosophy. It was accepted and reconsidered in the Islamic world from the ninth through the twelfth centuries. It is with good reason that (as we said at the beginning) during the domination of the Muslim Moguls in India from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, some Islamic philosophers spread translated Greek texts as far as the Bay of Bengal.

Note also the fact that modern and contemporary philosophy has always been nourished on the classics. This is true not only for Descartes and Hegel, but also for Bergson and even Marx. Therefore, no one could consider ancient Greco-Roman philosophy to be a parochial or regional thought; its vocation is universal. This was understood well by the Church Fathers, and in the Middle Ages by Saint Thomas Aquinas, St. Albert the Great and all the greatest spirits of Christianity. This is also seen in the drawing together of primitive cultures and classical philosophy, for instance in the Pontifical Urban University, where Africans and Asiatics study this philosophy as if it were domestic, or at least natural. This philosophy represents – as has been authoritatively stated – the "ratio naturalis" in its most authentic critical vocation.

NOTES

[1] I will mention some notably competent works such as: Carmelo Ottaviano, *Manuale di storia della filosofia*, Naples, vol. I, 1970; Giovanni Reale and Dario Antiseri, *Il pensiero occidentale dalle origini ad oggi*, Brescia, vol. I, 1983; Giannantoni Gabriele, *La ricerca filosofica, Storia e Testi*, vol. I, Florence 1984; Geymonat Ludovico, *Storia del pensiero filosofico*, Milan, vol. I, 1977.

[2] Maulana Abdul Kalam, in his introduction to the *History of Philosophy Eastern and Western*, I, London 1952 (edited by Sarwapalli Radhakrishna, translated into Italian, Milan 1962) states that the Indian Muslim philosopher Muhil Allah Bihar (died 1675) wrote, among other works, the essay Al Shams al B' Azigha, in which the author was inspired by Avicenna and Aristotle (p. 631–632). However, in 1966 in the locality Ai Khanum, on the northern border of Afghanistan, an inscription was found which proves that, after Alexander the Great's conquest, a "gymnasium" was erected where Clearch of Soli, a peripatetic philosopher, taught. Inscribed on a column are 140 of the greatest Delphic morals. As in Kandahar, the edicts of the Indian king Ashoka were inscribed in elegant Greek. This demonstrates the expansion of Greek culture to the East in the second century B.C. (cfr. F. W. Walbank, *The Hellenistic World*, translated into Italian Il mondo ellenistico, Bologna 1983, pp. 64–65).

[3] With the word *philosophy*, we mean a critical science of being in general; this is not only an initial knowledge of the existent, common to all men and beginning from infancy, but a mature and organic knowledge with a *method* surpassing those of the lower sciences (mathematics, physics, biology, etc.) in intensity and comprehension. Its *object* extends over being as such and in all its extension; it is not limited only to the quantity of beings (mathematics), or to mass and movement (physics), or to life (biology), etc. This knowledge is not merely ingenuous, but critical, because it regards the problem of being's emergence over

non-being. This is formulated in the question: why is there being rather than non-being? With the word *history* we refer to the comprehensive study of the documents, traditions and customs of a social group. In fact, human events (not physical facts, whose history is called geology or paleontology) are either isolated and unobserved (in which case they are not part of history and are called ahistorical) or are socially relevant (and hence are observed and communicated as memories). If the communication takes place orally, we have a *tradition*; if it occurs through practice, we have a *custom*. If the communication is made through documents and monuments, then we have either a *chronicle* (if the events are recorded in purely chronological succession) or *history* (if the events are recorded in their internal concatenation. If the historical consciousness is adult, *historiography* is born, which is the critical study of the chronicle and the history, often in relation to traditions and customs. While history refers documents, historiography refers to historians. Hence, the variety of historiographic methods. According to various opinions, historiographers should *calculate* with statistical or mathematical methods (P. Veyne), or they should *describe* (K. Popper, Aron), or *interpret* (Hegel, Marx), or *comprehend* (as we believe).

[4] For a detailed exposition of these problems, there are both general works (for example, the "Bibliografia critica generale per la storia del pensiero classico" of Andrea Mario Moschetti in the *Grande Antologia filosofica*, "Il pensiero classico", vol. I, Milan 1954, pp. XXVII–LXXI; Giovanni Reale offers precious didactic guidance in the fifth volume of his monumental *Storia della filosofia antica*, entitled "Lessico, Indici, Bibliografia", Milan 1980) and partial studies, such as the pre-Socratic ones by Hermann Diels (*Doxographi graeci*, Berlin 1879), of Ettore Bignone on Aristotle (*L'Aristotele perduto e la formazione filosofica di Epicuro*, 2 volumes, Florence 1936), and of Paul Moreaux (*Les listes anciennes des ouvrages d'Aristote*, Louvain 1951. Also worthy of mention is Giorgio Colli, *La sapienza greca*, vol. I, *Dionisio*, *Apollo*, *Eleusi*, *Orfeo*, *Museo*, *Iperborei*, *Enigma*, Milan 1977; vol. II, *Epimenide*, *Ferecide*, *Talete*, *Anassimandro*, *Anassimene*, *Onomacrito*, Milan 1978).

[5] Cfr. Gaetano De Sanctis, *Storia dei Greci dalle origini alla fine del secolo V*, I, 3rd edition, Florence, 1942, pp. 159–167. The name "Achaeans" is found in Hittite documents with the word "Ahhijava" (hence the name "Achaia"). The word "Ionians" ("Yavanas" in Sanskrit) refers to the Greeks who occupied the northern coast of Anatolia in later times.

[6] Cfr. Giovanni Reale, *Storia della filosofia antica*, I, *Dalle origini a Socrate*, Milan 1979, pp. 12–77. Earlier A. Burnet (*Early Greek Philosophy*, London 1930) observed that in the period from the sixth to the third centuries B.C. there was no notable Greek who knew the Eastern languages well enough to be able to read an Egyptian book, or even listen to an Egyptian discourse. Only later is there an indication of Easterners who understood and wrote in Greek. This does not

negate cultural precedents from the regions of Syria and Egypt. For example, regarding music, a text on cuneiform tablets found at Ugarit (today Ras Shamra in Syria) dating back to 1400 B.C. has been deciphered. The tablets were interpreted by the Assyrian expert Anne D. Kilmer (University of California, Berkeley) as a ten-line text; they contain an ode with love music in lullaby form; the music is Western style, with a diatonic scale. Of the ten lines, six contain instructions on how to play and sing the ode. Until now, we have possessed, as the most ancient musical text, a song from Euripides' *Orestes* on papyrus dating from 400 B.C. (cfr. *Time*, Europe, vol. 103, 11 March 1974, p. 47).

[7] From Herodotus (*Histories*, II, 4) we know that the solar year was introduced by the Egyptians. In fact, from archaeological reports we know that the Sumerians counted only the days, grouped into a "sar" of 3600 days. A certain Dumuzi of Bad-Tibira lived 10 "'sar", or 36,000 days; today we could say 96 years. Counting time with years began in 4241 B.C. The pyramids testify to a technology based on very advanced knowledge of static science and geometry. However, as Aristotle and already observed, Egyptian mathematics and geometry did not flow from the organic system of a science, but from concrete needs. The Nile floods wiped out territorial confines on a yearly basis; therefore, there was need for a practical method of measuring, as Proclus himself stated in the fifth century A.D. (*Review or Elements of Geometry*). However, the Egyptians possessed notions of surgery, odontology, etc. This explains why first-generation philosophers up to Plato travelled to Egypt to enlarge their knowledge: from Thales (who measured the Pyramids) to Pythagoras, from Anaxagoras to Plato. The Sumerians or Assyro-Babylonians promoted astrology, or the study of the firmament for magical reasons. It is from this source that the zodiac is believed to have derived, as well as the conception of the universe as a cosmic egg (broken in two: one part empty, the sky; the other full, with the oceans and the earth). From them also seems to derive the idea of eternal return of things and the abstract concept of numbers and symbols (cfr. G. Castellino, "Il concetto sumerico di 'Ma' nella sua accezione concreta", in *Analecta biblica, Studia et Orientalia*, III, Rome, 1959, pp. 25–52). On the myth of the cosmic egg, cfr. Theodore Gomperz, *Pensatori Greci*, translated into Italian, vol. I, Florence 1930, p. 144, note 1).

[8] A rehabilitation of Greek religiosity in an ethical direction was attempted by Carlo Del Grande ('*Hybris*', *Colpa e castigo nell'espressione poetica e letterarie degli scrittori della Grecia antica da Omero a Cleante*, Naples 1947) and by Rodolfo Mondolfo (*La comprensione del soggetto umano nell'antichità classica*, Florence 1959), with partial results. The "hybris", or human haughtiness before gods and men, takes on the value more of an error or crime to expiate than of a moral guilt from which one must purify himself.

[9] Some recent authors tend to exclude the Orphic religion from the Greek cultural sphere; for example, Otto Walter (*La religione dei Greci*, translated into

Italian, Florence 1937) and E. R. Dodds (*The Greeks and the Irrational*, translated into Italian, Florence 1959) state that Orphism was an outgrowth of the religion of the shamans, magicians who came from Scythia (Russia).

[10] It does not seem reasonable to support the thesis of Herman Dooyeweerd (*A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, I, *The Necessary Presupposition of Philosophy*, 1953), according to whom Greek philosophy was born from a conflict between the religion of "matter" (Orphism) and of "form" (Olympian religion) (p. 63). However, along with Richard Kroner (*Speculation in Pre-Christian Philosophy*, Philadelphia, s.d.) we may state that the moral uncertainty of religious forms and Hellenic aesthetism provoked a certain detachment of philosophy from religion.

[11] Cfr. Edwin Rhode, *Psyche, Seelenkult und Unesterblichkeitsglaube der Griechen*, 2 volumes, Freiburg in Br., 1890–1894; more recently W.K.C. Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion*, London, 2nd edition, 1952. We may connect to this thesis the notable work of F. Nietzsche, *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, 1872, according to whom the Dionysiac dithyramb had arisen from the religious experience of song and music, and this was later transfigured into tragedy and metaphysics (n. 21).

[12] This thesis has been proposed by the above-mentioned T. Gomperz. However, E. Zeller (insofar as he refutes the Orphic religion and take refuge in a rationalistic philosophy) can also be counted among the defenders of illuminism "ante litteram" (cfr. Zeller Mondolfo, *Filosofia dei Greci nel suo sviluppo storico*, translated into Italian, I vol., 2nd edition, Florence 1943, pp. 100–263).

[13] Hippocrates was born in Aegean island of Cos in 460 B.C.; he travelled extensively, from Scythia (today Russia) (of which he left a vivid description in the work *The Air, the Waters, the Places*) to Libya. He retired to Thessalia, where he apparently died in 370. The *Corpus hippocraticum* is attributed to him, an anthology of medical works: 53 of them, in 72 books, including his famous oath (cfr. Hippocrates, *Opere*, Turin 1968). The essay *The Sacred Malady* (referring to epilepsy) is a study in which Hippocrates argues against charlatans and popular superstition, which attribute to devotion and divine intervention what should be explained by using the brain. Religion has the goal of purifying hearts and making man more respectful of the gods (n. 4).

[14] Louis Gernet, *Anthropologie de la Grèce antique*, translated into Italian, Milan 1983, p. 358.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 353.

[16] Marino Gentile, *La metafisica presofistica*, Padua 1939, pp. 81 ff. "Historia is a word used by Heraclitus which signifies experience, the constant reference to the objective data of direct knowledge» (cfr. H. Diels, fr. A, 35).

[17] In the seventh century, Miletus had over 50,000 inhabitants and had founded 90 colonies from the Black Sea (such as Synope, Trebisondas and other cities in present-day Turkey), Tarentum, Marseilles, Sibari with a Greek station

on the Nile, Naucratis, in the times of the Pharaoh Psammeticus (663–610). The Milesians exported ceramics and textiles.

[18] The fragments and testimonials of the pre-Socratics were gathered by Hermann Diels beginning in 1879. Today, references are made to the slight modifications made by W. Kranz (cfr. the three volumes of *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 8th edition, 3 volumes, Berlin 1956), with translations into various European languages from the original German. However, the fragments and testimonials are given in Greek and Latin, according to the original sources. The defect of Diels is that he follows the chronological order of the sources and not the systematic order of the pre-Socratic doctrines.

[19] A final essay is that of Aldo Testa, *Essere e divenire nei monisti presocratici*, Bologna 1966.

[20] Jäger writes: ". . . knowledge and reverence for the gods are one the same for them. To this extent, it is quite right to designate the philosophy of the pre-Socratic period as a MODUS DEUM COGNOSCENDI ET COLENDI, that is religion". (*The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers*, Oxford 1952, p. 174). For Rodolfo Mondolfo, cfr. *Alle origini della filosofia nella cultura*, Bologna 1956; for Karl Joel, *Der Ursprung der Naturphilosophie aus dem Geiste der Mystik*, Jena 1903, 1926; for Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy*, New York 1957.

[21] Cfr. Renato Laurenti, *Introduzione a Talete, Anassimandro, Anassimene*, Bari 1971; the author correctly observes the absolute originality of Ionian philosophy, its metaphysical and non-primitive character. However, the tendency to impose modern schemes on Ionian thought is visible, for example, in E. H. Hutten, who applies Freudian categories with the following ridiculous discovery. Science and philosophy arose from the repression of the instincts and later by the Greeks' sublimation of the instincts in the seventh and sixth centuries. It is also added that "Thales the scientist assumed as the primordial substance the maternal bosom, or rather the milk present in the bosom" (*Le origini storiche e psicologiche della scienza*, translated into Italian, Rome 1972, pp. 78–79).

[22] W. R. C. Guthrie (*A History of Greek Philosophy*, I, *Earlier Presocratics and Pythagoreans*, Cambridge 1962), excludes every dependence of the myth on Thales' formulation: be it that of Hesiod, where Oceanus is the son of the earth and has no relevance in Homer; be it Orphic, or Egyptian, or Babylonian of Apsu Ti'amat (masculine or feminine, origin of the world in quality of water and the mire – p. 60 ff.). Still, Guthrie finishes by imposing schemes on the few sources we do possess, which is not acceptable.

[23] M. Pohlenz, *L'uomo greco*, translated into Italian, Florence 1961, p. 113.

[24] O. Gigon (*Der Ursprung der griechischen Philosophie von Hesiod bis Parmenides*, Basel 1945), in observing that Plato does not include Thales among the Milesians, opines that Aristotle had read at least the writings of Anaximander and

Anaximenes. This makes the existence of any writing of Thales to be very doubtful indeed.

[25] To him is attributed the "theorem of Thales": Diogenes Laërtius recounts that in Egypt he measured the height of the Pyramids, and he invented the "diabetes", a nautical instrument which was a type of compass with poles having a variable aperture;. This was used to measure the distance from a ship to the coast or to another ship (cfr. B. Gladigow, "Thales und der DIABETES", in *Hermes*, 1969, pp. 264–275).

[26] There is a well-known facetious story about a Thracian woman, who laughed heartily when Thales fell into a ditch while observing the night and the skies (Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives*, I, 1, 34). Thales purportedly measured the size of the sun, discovered the magnet and the cause of eclipses, and predicted the (astronomically certain) eclipse of 28 May 585 B.C.

[27] It is Hegel's version which interpreted the "physis" as a universal idea (cfr. G. F. Hegel, *Lezioni di storia della filosofia*, translated into Italian, Perugia 1930, p. 198).

[28] T. Gomperz, *op. cit.*, p. 70. Even more of a fantasy is stated by Bertrand Russell when he considers Thales as the precursor of atomic theory (*History of Western Philosophy*, I, *Greek Philosophy*, translated into Italian, Milan 1971, p. 54).

[29] Aristotle's value as a historian is under discussion even today. We leave this dispute to specialists (cfr. Guthrie, *op. cit.*, p. 56).

[30] W. Jäger states: "[His philosophy] takes as its point of departure the given realities of human experience: 'onta', the thing that exists [*The Theology*]", *op. cit.*, p. 18.

[31] It seems correct to me when Guthrie states: "Physis could be both process, and constitution or developed form, and the Milesians were interested in both aspects". *op. cit.*, p. 83.

[32] Some authors, perhaps for a good reason, see in the conception of water as the foundation of the universe the echo of the myth of superior and inferior waters (the cosmic egg?), which was found in the Egyptians, Hebrews and Sumerians. Therefore, Plato ties Thales' cosmogony with that of the Egyptians (cfr. Umberto Curi, *I presocratici*, Vicenza 1967).

[33] For example, K. J. Popper sees in him a Baconian spirit "ante litteram", and his ideas are celebrated as the "boldest, most revolutionary and portentous of the entire history of thought" (*Conjectures and Refutations*, London 1963, p. 138).

[34] Cfr. Marcel De Corte, "Anaximandre" in *Laval Théologie et philosophie*, XVIII, 1962, p. 34 ff.

[35] For example, cfr. Guthrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 89–115; Anaximander thought that the universe derived from an originary fire, from which it became detached as it transformed into an igneous celestial zone. Hence were formed the vault of the

heavens and an inferior zone including the waters on the bottom. The first zone would move in a whirling fashion; hence the sun and the moon became detached. The stars would be luminous openings through which the light of the superior inflamed area descends; the earth, in cylindrical form, is freely equidistant from the two zones. The sun would be 27 times larger than the earth, and the moon is 17 times larger. The earth, which was originally water, gradually retreated and dried. From the watery slime the fish transformed themselves into men (an observation of a tadpole or of fossils?). The sun does not sleep at night, but turns on the inverse side of the night, etc.

[36] T. Gomperz, *op. cit.*, p. 87, and Guthrie, *op. cit.*, p. 84. According to the latter author, the "âpeiron" should be conceived as "an indistinct mass which continuously" produces life, from which death follows. See Antonio Maddalena, *Sulla cosmologia ionica da Talete a Eraclito*, Padua 1940.

[37] Willy Theiler, *Zur Geschichte der theologischen Naturbetrachtung bis auf Aristoteles*, 2nd edition, Berlin 1962, p. 4; Richard Kroner, *Speculation in Pre-Christian Philosophy*, Philadelphia, s.d., p. 85–86; G. Galifi, "Aspetti metafisici del pensiero di Anassimandro", in *Aquinas* XXII, 1979, pp. 74–93.

[38] W. Jäger, *The Theology of the early Presocratics, op. cit.*, p. 36; the author adds that "theology, theogony and theodicy functioned next to each other" (*ibid.*) A more interesting thesis is proposed by Virginia Guazzoni Foà, according to whom the denomination of "atéleston", when attributed to the "âpeiron", does not indicate the indeterminate, but the infinite in a positive sense, in the sense of a global indetermination which includes within itself an intensity of determinations ("Dall" 'âpeiron' di Anassimandro all "atéleston' di Parmenide", in *Giornale di Metafisica*, V, 1960, pp. 465–474).

[39] M. Heidegger, "Der Spruch des Anaximander", in *Holzwege*, Frankfurt 1950, p. 223; cfr. P. Chiodi, "Heidegger e Anassimandro, La metafisica come oblio dell'essere", in *Rivista di Storia della filosofia*, VII, 1952, pp. 161–182. A slightly differing view is expressed by Emmanuele Severino ("La parola di Anassimandro", in *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica*, LV, 1963, II, pp. 245–273).

[40] Enzo Paci's statement is debatable: ". . . The pre-Socratic philosophers, when they spoke of the 'arché' principle, did not always mean to speak of a generating principle in time, even if it was a generator of time" (*Storia del pensiero dei Presocratici*, Torino 1957, p. 40).

[41] It seems excessive to us to deduce from "theîon" the denomination "God" (cfr. N. Gonzales Caminero, *Historia Philosophiae*, I, *Philosophia antiqua*, Rome 1960, p. 55).

[42] In fact, the Pythagoreans are divided into three categories: the *classic* or ancient ones (which we study here); the so-called *middle Pythagoreans*, those false authors who wrote apocryphal works on Pythagoras in the Hellenistic period (third through the first centuries B.C.); according to a list gathered by philologist

H. Thesleff (*An Introduction to Pythagorean Writings of the Hellenistic Period*, Abo 1961), there were more than seventy *middle Pythagoreans*, as we also read in Giovanni Reale, *Storia della filosofia antica*, Lexicon–Index–Bibliography, Milan 1980, pp. 422–427). The *neo-Pythagoreans*, whom we will discuss later, numbered no more than ten and lived from the first century B.C. through the fourth century A.D.

[43] There exists a large bibliographical study of these, three volumes long, edited by M. Timpanaro Cardini (*Pitagorici, Testimonianze e frammenti*, Florence, 2nd edition, 1969).

[44] A. Rostagni, *Il verbo di Pitagora*, Turin 1924 (and in other works); Cornelia De Vogel, *Pythagoras and Early Pythagoreans*, Assen 1966. For example, Rostagni states that the four discourses reported by lamblichus (*Vita Pythagorae*) are substantially true (*Un nuovo capitolo nella storia della retorica e della sofistica, Scritti Minori*, I, Turin 1955, pp. 1–49); this opinion is shared, more or less, by De Vogel.

[45] Among them is included Guthrie, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

[46] The phrase was considered significant by various historians, such as Frank, Tricot, Timpanaro Cardini, G. Reale (cfr. *Aristotele, La Metafisica, Traduzione, Introduzione, commento*), volume I, Naples 1968, pp. 164–165). In general, it is believed that Aristotle wished to indicate a current of thought very active in the time when he wrote (335–328 B.C.).

[47] Cfr. Aurelio Covotti, *I Presocratici*, Naples 1934. The author sees in Parmenides' "opinions of mortals" an echo of Aminias the Pythagorean, his teacher. However, the verses are not always attributed to Pythagoras. Kranz attributes them to Heraclitus, as does Rostagni (*Il verbo di Pitagora*, p. 24). A. Pasquinelli (*I Presocratici, Frammenti e Testimonianze*, Turin) claims a generic meaning, but the dualism mentioned by Parmenides (with two cosmic elements, the "pneuma" and matter) does not seem to leave any doubt about his Pythagorean meaning.

[48] A. Maddalena (*I Pitagorici*, Bari, 1954), observed that in Egypt this doctrine was completely unknown; instead, the common belief was of the "justified deceased" (p. 65).

[49] For the dates I followed the indications of Rostagni and De Vogel.

[50] From this, some find reason to distinguish the "acusmatic" Pythagoreans – that is, "listeners" or jealous repeaters of the school secrets until about 450 B.C., and the "mathematics" or "scientists" who brought Pythagorean teaching into the public domain, giving it (especially in Greece) a less religious tone.

[51] For Pythagoras' dependence on Anaximenes, cfr. Diogenes Laërtius, VIII, 41.

[52] Guthrie, *op. cit.*, p. 240. We should note the passage, which in the nineteenth century gave rise to a dispute between Zeller and Burnet on the value of the

Pythagorean number. The former proclaimed a geometric significance, the second a physical meaning. Rostagni correctly notes that in the sixth and fifth centuries the cipher did not exist for the Greeks; what existed was only a material representation with pebbles ("psaphos"), or a "calculus" which was performed in assemblies. The pebble was the number in the physical sense, while the number has arithmetic value (*op. cit.*, p. 27, note 2).

[53] It is worth noting C. De Vogel's observation, according to which "nowhere in the Pythagorean texts is this distinction made between the transcendental number as example and mathematical order" (*op. cit.*, pp. 200–201); this is true because the number always has a transcendental, real value for them. It is divine ("theîon"), not a cipher, but an element (as the molecule or an atom is to us).

[54] We may also add the doctrine of some Marxists, like G. Thomson (*Studies in Ancient Greek Philosophy*, 2 volumes), who in his *The First Philosophers* (London 1955, p. 263) concedes the primacy of arithmetics and mathematics, because the Greeks were merchants and these sciences were necessary to keep accounts!

[55] G. Reale, *op. cit.*, p. 101; Guthrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 224–225.

[56] We read in Aristotle (*De Coelo*, 290, 12 ff.) that every star emits sounds according to various intervals. These sounds would be attributed to Sirenes which sit above, but whose harmony men habitually do not perceive. The anti-earth, or tenth body, finds itself at the antipodes of our planet, but as an autonomous planet closest to the central fire.

[57] The triangle appears in Masonic symbols; it is not without reason that in 1953 the International Masonic Order organised a pilgrimage to Kroton and other places in Magna Greecia, to commemorate their "venerable brothers"! This statement, however, has no historical foundation.

[58] A. Maddalena (*op. cit.*, pp. 350–351), for example, negates any connection between the Orphic religion (the myth of Dionysus or Zagreus) and Pythagorean anthropology. E. Zeller and R. Mondolfo (*La filosofia nel suo sviluppo storico*. I, *La filosofia presocratica*, *vol. II*, *Ionici e Pitagorici*, Florence 1938, pp. 643–648) analogously believe that the cathartic conception of life (in which the "body is a tomb": "Soma sêma") is extraneous to the Pythagoreans. Even before these two authors, this opinion was advanced by Rhode. But C. De Vogel has a different opinion: human life has a religious, moral and educative meaning.

[59] See the minutely detailed information given by Gomperz, *op. cit.*, pp. 226–234. Cfr. also D. Teti, *Alcmeone e Pitagora, scuola media crotoniate e scuola filosofia italica*, Padua 1970.

[60] Leonardo Ferrero, *Storia del Pitagorismo nel mondo romano. Dalle origini fino alla fine della Repubblica*, Turin 1955. However, it seems that the story of Numa the Pythagorean is a legend.

[61] This is not only Alcmeon's research: in Kroton a medical school existed

even before Pythagoras' arrival. In fact, it is known that Calliphon and his son Democedes became so famous that the latter became the physician to Polycrates, tyrant of Samo and Darius and king of Persia. Regarding Hippocrates, cfr. the introduction to Hippocrates' works, *Ippocrate*, translated into Italian, Turin, pp. 9 ff.

[62] The exposition of pre-Socratic philosophers given here follows more a chronological than a systematic order. Some historians use other criteria: for example, T. Gomperz places Xenophanes before Heraclitus. Some (like Gigon) place the Eleatics and Empedocles after the Pythagoreans, all under the category of the Italian school.

[63] According to Aram Frenkian (*Etudes de Philosophie Présocratiques, Héraclit de Ephèse*, Cernauti, 1933, p. 22), this demonstrates a Philo-Persian sympathy. However, if the letter (which Diogenes Laërtius reported) from Heraclitus to Darius is authentic, then it could be said that the philosopher was proud, even before the Great King (Diogenes Laërtius, IX, I, 15). Of the 126 fragments preserved, 32 show anti-democratic sentiments. For example: "One capable man is worth more than ten thousand Ephesians" (fragment B 79). Attacking the popular party which had exiled his friend Hermodorus, he exclaimed, "Let them go hang themselves" (fragment B 121).

[64] This observation was made by Wilhelm Cappelle (*Geschichte der Philosophie*, Berlin, 1953, I. p. 62).

[65] Hence the fascination he creates in scholars; it should not be forgotten that in 1981 in Chieti, an international congress on Heraclitus took place, with the participation of 52 specialists. The acts of this congress are preserved in two volumes published in 1984. Cfr. *Atti del Symposium Heracliteum*, 1981, edited by Livio Rossetti, vol. I, University of Chieti, s.d.

[66] It is debatable whether the prophetic or aphorical form is due to the fragments, which have been passed on to us as provocative and paradoxical shreds (as W. Jäger states in *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers*, *op. cit.*, p. 111), or to the original text (as Pasquinelli affirms, *op. cit.*, p. 364). In any case, Heraclitus was a stylistic innovator "through the power of abstraction" (H. Diels, *Zwei Fragmente Heraclit's*, Berlin 1901, quoted by Frenkian, p. 25).

[67] A. Covotti, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

[68] H. S. Kirk, *Heraclitus, The Cosmic Fragments*, Cambridge University Press 1954, states that "the so-called book of Heraclitus" (Diogenes Laërtius, IX, 5) was edited by a disciple into the form of a collection of sayings. Hence Heraclitus would not have written anything. This thesis is quite improbable and was rejected by Gigon (*Der Ursprung der griechischen Philosophie von Hesiod bis Parmenides*, Basel 1945, p. 8). No mention exists of Heraclitean anthologies like those of Epicurus, and Aristotle would not have mentioned Heraclitus' ambiguous punctuation without having the text at his fingertips.

[69] It should be mentioned that Heraclitus was little known after the classical and neo-Platonic era. Only in 1807 did Schleiermacher edit the first collection of 72 fragments. However, after the discovery of Hippolytus' entire work, the number of fragments increased to over 100. In 1877 the Englishman Bywater edited a second collection of 130 fragments; after a more critical inquiry of the sources (using Bernays' and Lassalle's studies), Diels added 5 more fragments, but he rejected some of the ones in Bywater's edition, bringing the number to 126. The "practical criteria" (Cappelle, *op. cit.*, p. 63) which guided Diels are not all plausible. Other criteria were followed by Pasquinelli and R. Walzer (*Eraclito. Raccolta di frammenti*, Florence 1939). A systematic edition was edited by F. Marcovich (*Heraclitus, Greek Text with a Short Commentary*, Merida, Venezuela 1967).

[70] K. Popper recently opposed Zeller, and hence the Platonic interpretation (*The Open Society and its Enemies*, translated into Italian, Rome 1973). According to Popper, the primary sense Heraclitus' philosophy was unity: "the colossal process" where the edifice of the world is subjected to the "law of destiny" (p. 34).

[71] Umberto Curi, *Dagli Ionici alla crisi della fisica, Saggi di una nuova storia della filosofia*, Padua 1973, p. 57.

[72] See the beautiful essay of M. De Corte, "La vision philosophique d'Héraclit", in *Laval théologique et philosophique,* XVI, 1960, pp. 189–236.

[73] Jacques Duchesne Guillemin is also close to this opinion ("Le logos en Iran et in Grèce", in *Filosofia*, XIII, 1962, pp. 544–561), who saw "general analogies" between the Aryan religion of the Iranians and of the Indian religion. The author especially refers to the words "ritam asa", which indicated the Zoroastrian fire of truth, or the personification: evil-good, light-darkness, etc.

[74] We can certainly find "coincidences" between some of Heraclitus' aphorisms and the Upanishad. For example, in the Kathopanishad we read: "Many are those who are not capable of hearing him [the Atman]; many are those who have heard him, but do not understand him (Valli II, 7). Another example: "This Atman hidden in all things is no visible, but the far-seeing . . . see him with their superior and fine thought" (Valli II, 12). Still, these remain mere "coincidences".

[75] Pasquinelli, *op. cit.*, p. 575, note 27.

[76] On the real or symbolic value of fire, there are varied historians' opinions: some see it in the Ionian sense, as a primordial substance of reality. For example, the above-mentioned Ada Somigliano sees in the fire the Greek version of the Indian-Vedic "Tapas", the generating principle of ardor where the night and the ocean have their origins (*Rig Veda*, X). It is god, All, Atman, Brahman (cfr. Heraclitean fragments B, 10, 67). For Curi, the fire-logos is "nature" in the same

sense as Thales' water. Tannery and Burnet understand it to be a primordial substance (Curi, *art. cit.*, p. 36). Another opinion (which we share) is that the fire is a symbol of the logos. This interpretation is shared by Zeller, Spengler, Windelband and Guillermin, who considers the fire to be the symbolic formula of truth personified in contraries (*art. cit.*, p. 560). M. De Corte observed that fire is the archetype of the creative and destructive power (*art. cit.*, p. 217) and hence has symbolic value.

[77] Cfr. Aldo Bonetti, "La concezione dialettica della realtà di Eraclito", in *Rivista di filosofia Neoscolastica*, LI, 1959, pp. 289–310. Gottlieb Söhngen (*Grundfrage einer Rechtstheologie*, Munich 1962, p. 27) states that light, truth and law are equivalent expressions of the logos; "dike" would be the hidden, not-yet-unveiled law, which in revealing itself makes things true ("alethés") and hence just. However, Bonetti rejects this exegesis, stating that in this fashion the logos does not mean "reason" or "thought activity", but rather a synthesis of real and social structures. (against A. Jannière, *La pensée d'Héraclit d'Ephèse*, Paris 1959).

[78] This fragment allows a variety of interpretations. M. Heidegger translates it as follows: "The [familial] sojourn of man is the aperture in which the divine essence [the prodigious] makes itself present" (*Brief über den Humanismus*). A. Magris and Pasquinelli (*op. cit.*, p. 192) translate as follows: "Man's character is his demon".

[79] Cfr. Enzo Paci, "Le concezioni mitologico-filosofica del logos di Eraclito", in *Acme*, 1949, 1–1. Therefore, A. Macchioro's thesis (*Eraclito*, Bari 1962) seems unacceptable, according to which Heraclitus' religiosity would bear the profound imprint of adhesion to the Orphic mysteries. In his favour, the author quotes the following fragments: 52, 14, 15, 69, 27, 63, 93, etc.

[80] A debate exists on the meaning of Heraclitus' religiosity. On one hand, Gigon thesis (*Untersuchungen zu Heraclit*, Leipzig 1935, pp. 135 ff.) states that Heraclitus professed a type of rationalism which started with the Ionians and found its highest expression in Xenophanes. A different opinion is held by W. Jäger, Guthrie and Mazzantini, who describe Heraclitus as a religious prophet whose divinity is (as Franklin states) "Objet d'une intuition mystique" (*op. cit.*, p. 35), in that the name ['ónoma'] of Zeus does not seem to adequately contain in itself all the reality of the supreme being". The "willing" and "non-willing" of fragment B 32 indicate the two poles between which the religious system rests: from cults and popular beliefs ("non-will") to the "One [divine] wisdom" ("will"). The expression belongs to Pasquinelli, *op. cit.*, p. 568, note 13.

[81] W. Jäger, *op. cit.*, p. 113; Walzer, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

[82] Cfr. G. Martano, *Contrareità e dialettica nel pensiero antico*, Naples 1972; W. J. Verdenius, "Der Logosbegriff bei Heraclit und Parmenides", in *Phronesis*, 1966, pp. 81–98.

[83] He states: "The attractive virtue of contraries by which they come together is sought to form a superior unity. This attraction is co-essential with things" (M. Timpanaro Cardini, *Eraclito*, Lanciano 1933, p. 30). See also R. Lahaye, *La philosophie Ionienne*, Paris 1967, p. 131–137.

[84] This is the correct argumentation of K. Popper against Kirk and Raven.

[85] A. Frenkian supports a probable affinity between the Platonic myth of the god-King and Shepherd of the universe (*Polit.* 273 b c) and Heraclitus' doctrine of becoming. When the world becomes ill and turns into fire, the god will take the world back up, through history. The old will become young, and the dead will rise again; the fire will become water (fragment B 31). This would explain Clement of Alexandria's reference to Heraclitus as a prophet of the resurrection of bodies (*op. cit.*, pp. 45 ff.). Hence the sun would be a symbol and visible instrument of the god ("o theós"), who is the father, the cosmic reason ("gnome") governing everything through everyone.

[86] As is well-demonstrated by A. Frenkian, *op. cit.*, p. 36, chapter III, "La mimèse chez Héraclit".

[87] This is the thesis of M. Timpanaro Cardini, *op. cit.*, p. 48. Along with M. Pohlenz, we should also observe that the word "gnome" which Heraclitus attributes to the "logos" remains enclosed in the Greek way of thought, where the "noeîn" is a wisdom through will, and where the "gnome" is a deliberative act with which the magistrate, having heard the pros and cons of the assembly, decides. The decision is "gnome", or a "dogma". "The Greek mentality does not show a particular need for a particular will independent of the intellect" (*L'uomo greco*, translated into Italian, *op., cit.*, p. 399).

[88] For the history, cfr. Mario Napoli, *Guida degli scavi di Velia* (*Metaphys.* I, 986 b 20), Cava dei Tirreni 1972. The archaeological excavations were plagues with uncertainty and delays from their start in the nineteenth century. However, the work sped up considerably after 1945–50. Walls were discovered, 9.5 kilometres in length; in 1972 the theatre, forum and acropolis were discovered. Especially interesting in the above study is the 1962 discovery of a tablet dedicated to "Parmenides of Piretus, naturalist ['physokôi'], Uliades". P. Ebner ("Scuola di medicina a Velia e a Salerno", in *Apollo*, *Bollettino dei musei provinciali del Salernitano*, II, 1962, pp. 25 ff). P. Ebner, the discoverer of this text, found archaeological followers like H. Juker ("Zur Bildnis Herme des Parmenides", in *Museum Helveticum*, 1968, pp. 181–185) for whom the later discovery of the statue in 1966 revealed that it was a tablet, a copy of an original executed by Metrodorus of Lampsacus in the first century B.C. According to scholars, "Ulio" would mean "healer", or member of a Pythagorean association of physicians, and would have the meaning of a patronymic for the apollonian. "Physikós" would indicate not only a "naturalist philosopher", but also a grade in the Pythagorean hierarchy. This confirms the spreading of the Pythagorean school and of the "mos

[89] Carlo Corbato, "Postilla Senofanea", in *Rivista critica della storia della Filosofia*, XVIII, 1963, pp. 229–242. The author states ". . . from an examination of the tradition of testimonials, no clear, precise and incontrovertivle affirmation emerges regarding Xenophanes' Eleatic ontologism" (p. 230); ". . . if it ever existed,. . . then it, according to us, can be individuated a posteriori, exclusively in the sphere of the gnoseological counterposition between truth and opinion, between God and man (Diels B, 34)" (p. 231). According to Corbato, *De natura* reflects an Ionian mentality. This theory is rejected by Jäger; to quote Diogenes Laërtius ("And he also recited poems as rhapsodies" -IX, 18) does not mean that we must make of him a vendor of verses due to his disregard for Homer (Jäger, *op. cit.*, p. 358, note 25). Guthrie observes that Xenophanes belonged to the democratic spirits, although he was of aristocratoc origin (*op. cit.*, p. 473).

[90] K. Reinhardt, *Parmenides*, Bonn 1916.

[91] Cfr. K. Herzog, "Metaphysische Probleme in der Astronomie des Xenophanes", in *Kant-Studien* VIII, 1967, pp. 229–432. The author believes that Zeller was mistaken in presenting Xenophanes as a "physician". In Xenophanes we find a presentiment of the dialectic opinion: for example, in the relation between opinion and truth.

[92] V. Guazzoni Foà, *Attualità dell'ontologia eleatica*, Turin 1961, p. 6.

[93] Heraclitus' accusation that Xenophanes was a polymath probably refers to the preparatory stage of Xenophanes' philosophy (Pasquinelli, *op. cit.*, p. 358, note 25).

[94] I follow the opinions of G. Calogero, who substitutes "kradánei" with "kraánei" ("Senofane, Eschilo e la prima definizione dell'onnipotenza di Dio", in *Studi di filosofia greca*, Bari 1950, pp. 36 ff.; Diels, fragment 23–24). According to A. Covotti (*op. cit.*, p. 45) and G. Calogero ("Senofane, Eschilo e la prima definizione del'onnipotenza di Dio", *art. cit.*, pp. 54–55), Xenophanes gave the first technical definition of God's omnipotence. Plato and Aristotle, in separating the world from God's action, annulled Xenophanes' conquest. Christianity introduced "caritas" in the place of "eros" and re-invigorated Xenophanes' ancient concept.

[95] M. Untersteiner, Senofane, Florence 1955. This author follows Deichgräber (1938) in the belief that from the definition of God one can demonstrate his existence, with a procedure analogous to Anselm's.

[96] G. Reale, vol. I, *op. cit.*, pp. 114–115. Jäger, on the contrary, states that "Xenophanes is not to be dismissed with the world pantheist" (*op. cit.*, p. 43). Cfr. V. Guazzoni Foà, "Le recenti interpretazioni italiane e straniere dell'essere eleatico", in *Rivista di filosofia neo-scolatica*, 1958, pp. 326 ff.

[97] Hence the arrival at Parmenides' "mos pythagoricus". The Eleatic's dependence on Aminias is vigourously defended by J. Raven (*Pythagoreans and Eleatics*, 1948), J. Caminero (*op. cit.*, p. 82) and H. Diels.

[98] J. Mansfeld (*Die Offenburg des Parmenides and die menschliche Welt*, Assen 1964) states that the vision is not direct, but referred, insofar as the participle "eidós" (1, 3) gives the impression of an event that already happened. Whatever we say of the prologue, it is clear that this is an allegory, or a symbol of a religious experience, be it Orphic (Jäger) or Shamanic (Guthrie). This mystical tone of his philosophy is not present in the whole poem, and philosophy does not at all correspond with the revelation of the goddess, as A. Albertelli (*Parmenide*, Bari 1939, p. 121) and Mario Untersteiner (*Parmenide*, Florence 1958, p. LVII–LIX) explained.

[99] As has been convincingly demonstrated by H. Raven (*Pythagoreans and Eleatics, op. cit.*), E. Zafiropolos (*Les Eleates*, Paris 1950) and V. Guazzoni Foà (*L'attualità dell'ontologia eleatica*, Turin 1950).

[100] Guthrie has a complicated theory. Things are not here and there, nor do they make up the cosmos. The cosmos does not exist, because the ordered sum of the many annuls the parts. Space and time are abolished, yet being, as an ordered and compact sum, is compared by Parmenides to a ball. This comparison is not made because a ball is spheric, but in the sense that (as the sphere is perfect from its circumference to its centre) it has no differences. Hence being is uniform and compact (*Presocratic Tradition from Parmenides to Democritus*, vol. II, Cambridge 1965, p. 45).

[101] A different, logically oriented attempt was made by Giorgio Imbraguglia (*Teoria e mito in Parmenide*, Genova 1979). Being ("pelénai") does not mean "being", but the "turning" of the stars, because Parmenides does not aim to know existence as such, but to interpret what he calls the astro-cosmos and the bio-cosmos (p. 77). His is not a metaphysics, but a geometry (p. 140), a deductive and inferential science to explain the apparent movement of stars. However, metaphysics would be "a discourse referring us to a myth, a real determination of being" (p. 139), with "being" understood as the "linguistic aggregate formed within the field of lexicon" (p. 139).

[102] The thesis according to which Parmenides argued with Heraclitus in opposing change with being and multiplicity with one, today does not receive much respect (cfr. Zeller-Mondolfo, *Eraclito, frammento e imitazioni*, Florence 1982). Fragment B, 6, which attacks the "díkranoi" (the "two-headed") does not regard Heraclitus, but the Pythagoreans, or (as Ada Somigliano opines in "I versi 4 ss. del fr. B 6 di Parmenide e la supposta polemica antieraclitea", in *Rivista di filosofia neo-scolastica* LXVII, 1975 and "La presunta polemica Parmenide-Eraclito ed un errato principio interpretativo", in *Rivista di filosofia neo-scolastica* LVII, pp. 210–220) the Aryans' common way of feeling and speaking (cfr. the literature

of the Veda and Upanishad). E. Ducci proposed his own exegetical arguments in the debate on the unity of being as property anterior to presence, in "Il 'tò eón' parmenideo nella interpretazione di Simplicio", in *Angelicum* XL, 1963, pp. 173–195.

[103] R. Pasquinelli, *op. cit.*, p. 389, note 16; Untersteiner, *op. cit.*, p. XXXXVIII. A defence of Aristotle's interpretation was proposed by E. Ducci, "Il 'tò eón' parmenideo nella iunterpretazione di Simplicio", in *Angelicum* L, 1963, pp. 173–195). The author states that the central point of Parmenides' metaphysics is not being, but man.

[104] Cfr. V. Guazzoni Foà, "Dall" 'àpeiron' 'di Anassimandro all' 'atéleston' di Parmenide", in *Giornale di Metrafisica* XV, 1960, pp. 465–474. Parmenides "atéleston", although it is grammatically negative or privative, means "not able to be further perfected" or "not able to be perfected in the future".

[105] I follow Untersteiner in eliminating the "hén" from the text; "oulophyés" means total being. I also prefer "houlomelés" to "monogenés". Therefore, "to consider Parmenides the precursor of the presence of being means to find in the Eleatic's genuine thought a path to Thomistic being" (V. Guazzoni Foà, *art. cit.*, p. 33).

[106] The intuitive and fundamental character was not lost in later philosophy; it flowered in Plato (*Phaedrus*, 250 c; *Symposium*, 211 a), Democritus (for whom the "being-atom" and the "true atom" are the same thing) and in Aristotle, according to which in the "ousia" there exists a "delôsis", which is not demonstration.

[107] Some historians admits three ways: the "way of truth", the opposing "way of error", and "feelings of opinion". This is also read in texts B, 1, 28–32, where the goddess teaches three ways: those of absolute truth, absolute falsity, and opinion. In our exposition we have unified the first two into a singlwe "way of truth", with positive and negative moments (cfr. G. Reale, *Storia della filosofia antica* I, p. 120). However, there are also those who ask whether it is necessary to admit the way of the "two-headed, mute and blind" as different from the way of error (cfr. Untersteiner, *op. cit.*, p. CXVII), in reference to either Heracliteans, or Ionians, or Pythagoreans. See also G. Imbraguglia, op. cit., p. 112; cfr. Wallace I. Matson ("Parmenides Unbound", in *Philosophical Inquiry*, Volume II, 1, 1980, pp. 345–360) on the autonomous value of the "doxa", not as an alternative, but as an inferior gnoseological plane.

[108] Schuhl and De Marchi many years ago stated that the "doxa" was professed by Parmenides during his youth, but that he rejected it in his more mature years. Nevertheless, some trace of this would was preserved in his memory, and hence there exists an intrinsic opposition between the two ways.

[109] L. Stefanini, *art. cit.*, p. 60; M. Untersteiner, *op. cit.*, p. CLXXXXIX; Jäger, *op. cit.*, p. 105; E. Rostagni, *Aesthetica* I, Turin 1955, pp. 18–19.

[110] Guthrie, *op. cit.*, Volume II, p. 51. Parmenides' text makes the object of the "doxa" an "eoikós diàkosmos" (VIII, 50). It is not the non-being of false theories, but a provisory and preparatory, methodological being. Naturally, the materialists sought to demonstrate the primacy of the "doxa" and the cosmology that Parmenides hardly mentioned, as we read in Kornel Steiger. "Hippocrates, Philosophy and Medicine", in *Annales universitatis budapestinensis Sect. Philos. et Sociol.* XVI, 1982, Budapest, pp. 177–183).

[111] M. Untersteiner, *Zenone, Testimonianze e frammenti*, Florence 1963. Cfr. also Virginia Guazoni Foà, *Attualità dell'ontologia eleatica* (*op. cit.*, pp. 93–95).

[112] Cfr. G. W. Guthrie, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 83–85. But Calogero, captivated by his ideal to exclude every contact with Eleatics and Pythagoreans, took an extreme position, as V. Guazzoni Foà explains (*op. cit.*, p. 94) as H. Cherniss also explained. For example, Philolaus (Diels B, 47) reduces the problem of beings ("tà eónta") to opposites; finite-infinite.

[113] The argument is proposed in various ways: a) Zeller, Jackson, Gomperz and Windelband say that between the first and the third there is another being; b) Von Arnim, Nestle and Guazzoni Foà say that between one part of being and a second part there exists a distance, and between the distance of the two parts there exists another distance, and so on to infinity. The first interpretation conceives space as proceeding inwardly, the second outwardly.

[114] According to V. Guazzoni Foà, the two arguments are identical, but in the sense that the first would be the antithesis, and the second the thesis (cfr. *Attualità dell'ontologia eleatica*, p. 80). Albertelli agrees; therefore, the author proposes an inversion in the order. First there comes the thesis of infinite size, then the thesis of infinitely infinitesimal divisibility. This is seconded by Guthrie (II, 88–90), but he gives no reason for his opinion. It seems to me that the traditional exposition has its own meaning; it begins with a consideration of the whole (first argument) and then passes to a consideration of the parts (second argument).

[115] The argument is related by Simplicius (*In Arist. Phys.*, 1108, 18 ff.), but it is debated whether this is an argument against multiplicity or against mode (cfr. Pasquinelli, *op. cit.*, p. 424, note 52, where this argument is likened to the Megarian ones of "the bald man", "the heap", etc.).

[116] I repeat here the simple example given by T. Gomperz, *op. cit.*, pp. 282 ff.

[117] Cfr. G. De Sanctis, *Storia dei Greci*, Volume II, pp. 132–133.

[118] M. Untersteiner, "Un aspetto dell'essere melissiano", in *Rivista di storia della filosofia* VIII, 1953; G. Reale, "Melisso e la storia della filosofia greca", in *Melisso, Testimonianze e frammenti*, Florence 1970, passim. One of the most heated recent critics of Melissus is Emanuele Severino ("Ritorniamo a Parmenide", in *Rivista di filosofia neoscolastica* LVI, 1964, p. 153), who sees the dissolution of Parmenides' metaphysics from Melissus' first fragment.

[119] It is discussed whether this is co-extension in the strict sense (Calogero) or equivalence (G. Di Napoli, *L'essere presso i Greci*, Milan 1953, p. 48) of the eternal being with respect to the exterior succession of time.

[120] Guthrie, Volume II, pp. 112–113.

[121] Ettore Bignone, *Empedocle*, Turin 1916, p. 84.

[122] In honour of Theron, Pindar wrote his second *Olympic*. The court of Agrigentum was considered one of the greatest centres of culture and economy. Its population varied between 150,000 and 200,000 and hence represented (together with Syracuse and Athens) one of the three greatest attractions in the fifth-century Mediterranean. However, the 800,000 inhabitants mentioned by Diogenes Laërtius seems exaggerated (VIII, 2, 63).

[123] Therefore, E. R. Dodds (*The Greeks and the Irrational*, translated into Italian, Florence 1969, pp. 159–193) and M. Eliade (*La Chamanisme et les techniques archaîques*, Paris 1961, p. 19) think that this was Shamanist. However, the hypothesis does not seem correct, because the Shamans did not admit the palingenesis of souls.

[124] H. Kahn, "Religion and Natural Philosophy in Empedocles", in *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* XLII, 1960, pp. 3–35.

[125] Guthrie, Volume II, pp. 127–128; Jäger stated that the entire problem seemed forced, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

[126] Therefore, some scholars compare him to Goethe (Gomperz, Jaeger); Paci sees the legendary death in the crater of Aetna as a mystical reunification of man and nature (*op. cit.*, p. 95), whichy seems somewhat exaggerated.

[127] I use Bignone's Italian translation, as well as the recent one of Carlo Gallavotti (*Empedocle*, *Poema fisico e lustrale*, Verona 1975). The latter author not only intends to demolish the mythological figure of Empedocles the charlatan (*Ibid.*, XII), but tries to find the point of connection between the two poems. He says that the lustral poem was composed in Turii, when Empedocles came in contact with the Pythagorean doctrines of Locri, Kroton and Metapontus (*Ibid.*, XVIII) and later declared at Delphi or Olympia (*Ibid.*, XXI).

[128] Ettore Bignone, *op. cit.*, p. 127; cfr. also C. Gavallotti, *op. cit.*, p. 252 on the relation between air and blood in the phenomenon of respiration, and pp. 257–259 on the meaning to give to the experiment of the clepsydra. The author identifies Hedoneus with Pluto and Nestis (or Nestides) with Demetra. Guthrie's opinion is different (Volume II, pp. 144–145).

[129] Cfr. E. Bignone, *op. cit.*, p. 210, note 2. Contrary to Von Arnim (*op. cit.*, p. 598), the author holds that there are two cosmic cycles and that the present one would be dominated by hatred.

[130] E. Bignone, *op. cit.*, p. 70; W. Jaeger, *op. cit.*, p. 134. The word "pistis" is connected to revelation. The "message of the Muse" ("pistómata moúses", B, 52)

brings to mind the goddess' discourse in Parmenides, but the message of the Musae must be transformed into a doctrine ("logos").

[131] Empedocles uses the technical verb "epoptéuo", which indicates the contemplation of the initiate.

[132] Galavotti correctly observes that Empedocle has no true doctrine of metempsychosis, beçause the "psyché" dissolves through palingenesis and recomposes itself in its four elements in other bodies and in other combinations. The "daimon" is not subject to transmigration (*op. cit.*, pp. 285–287). This confirms the strict relation between the physical and lustral poems. See also the explanations of Charles H. Kahn, *art. cit.*, p. 18 on the provisional character of the "psyché". However, Gomperz opposed the immortal "daimon" to the "thumós" (in Latin "fumus", "dhumas" in Sanskrit, "dyman" in ancient Slavic), which means soul-smoke, which dissolves into air at death (*op. cit.*, p. 376).

[133] D. Ciurnelli's (*La filosofia di Anassagora*, Padua 1947, p.; 67) and B. Russell (*op. cit.*, p. 100) give a better date, and hence Anaxagoras came to Athens around 460. Burnet, Taylor and Jaeger place his arrival in 480, with a departure in 450.

[134] Cfr. Gregory Vlasṭos, "The Physical Theory of Anaxagoras", in *The Philosophical Review* (1950), pp. 31–57; C. Calvetti, "La Metafisica di Anassagora" in *Rivista di filosofia neoscolastica* XLII (1950), pp. 422–445.

[135] J. Zafiropulos, *Anaxagore de Clazomène*, Paris 1948, p. 286. Hence we better understand the sense of "homeomeria"; every seed is divisible infinitely without losing its reality. In dividing a hair, I obtain a hair; dividing gold, I always obtains parts of gold; etc. The parts always remain ontologically "equal" (cfr. G. Reale, *Storia della filosofia antica*, Volume I, p. 164; D. Lanza, *Anassagora*, *Testimonianze e frammenti*, *Introduzione*, *traduzione e commento*, Florence 1966.

[136] We do not accept Zafiropulos' opinion, where he calls the section Anaxagoras dedicates to the study of the cosmos "metaphysical", and his study of the efficient cause (the divine Mind) "myth" (*op. cit.*, p. 284). The cosmos is the "Noûs", as Calvetti observes (*art cit.*, p. 432), and hence they are bound together and make up a single philosophical design.

[137] Vittorio E. Alfieri, "La scuola di Abdera", in *Antologia della critica filosofica*, Bari 1961, pp. 138–160; Ibid., "Atomos-Idea, L'origine del concetto dell'atomo nel pensiero greco", in *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia* VI, 1952; A. G. M. Van Melsen, *Dall'atomos all'atomo*, translated into Italian, van Halgens, Brescia 1954. Abdera, a small colony of Clazomene from the seventh century, was situated in a swampy area near the Aegean sea and was quickly abandoned. However, the inhabitants of Teo, while escaping the Persian invasion, repopulated and reclaimed it.

[138] F. Enriquez and M. Mazziotta, Le dottrine di Democrito di Abdera, op. cit., p. 15.

[139] V. E. Alfieri, "Il divino in Democrito", in *Studi di filosofia greca*, Bari 1960,

p. 94. A materialistic enthusiast of Democritus is B. Russell, who said, "Democritus is the last of the Greek philosophers free from an error that impaired all subsequent ancient and medieval thought" (*op. cit.*, p. 113).

[140] Alfieri observes that the feminine "átomos" is explained by the fact that it is the adjective of ("idéa"), because the indivisible ("átomos") is perceptible only with thought ("idéa"). In other words, in affirming the existence of atoms, the Atomists do not entrust themselves to the senses, but to the Eleatic rationalism of being's pure intelligibility. Hence Democritus' solemn principle: "In essence there exist only atoms and nothingness" (B, 125) (Cfr. Alfieri, "Atomos e idea", *art. cit.*, and *Ibid.*, *Atomos-Idea*, *L'origine del concetto dell'atomo nel pensiero greco*, Galatina 1979).

[141] Cfr. Renato Composto ("Intorno a una testimonianza aristotelica su Democrito", in *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana* (1953), pp. (527–530), where the author states that the "diaphoraì tôn ónton", or the three ontological categories, do not make up atoms' ontological statute, but are only properties. It seems that there were more than three of these differences: for example, mixture, separation, etc.

[142] Maria Michela Sassi, *Le teorie della percezione in Democrito*, Florence 1978; H. Langerbeck, "Doxis epirhysmie", in *Neue Phil. Unters.*, Berlin 1935.

[143] Rodolfo Mondolfo, "Intorno alla gnoseologia di Democrito", in *Rivista critica di Storia di Filosofia* VII (1952), pp. 1 ff.; G. Capone Braga, "Il semi-soggettivismo di Democrito e il realismo di Epicuro", in *Studi su Epicuro*, Milan 1951.

[144] G. Capone Braga, *art. cit.*; the Sceptic disciples of Democritus were Metrodorus of Chios and Nausiphanes, who in turn was Epicurus' mentor. For a study on Democritus' contradiction in gnoseology, cfr. also Rodolfo Mondolfo. *La comprensione del soggetto umano nell'antichità classica*, Florence 1958, pp. 79–119. However, the author does not seem to interpret Aristotle correctly.

[145] See F. Mesiano (*La morale materialistica di Democrito d'Abdera*, Florence 1951), Q Cataudella ("L'Anonymus Jamblichi e Democrito", in *Studi italiani di filosofia classica*, 1923, I, p. 15), V. Guazzoni Foà ("Per una sistematicità interna dell'etica democritea", in *Giornale di Metafisica* XXIV (1969), pp. 532–537). The latter author holds that the "asphàleia" (which, according to Mesiano, is the key to Democritus' ethics) depends on the "syneídesis". Hence the internal moral judgement of conscience governs ethical "equilibrium" and makes possible the overcoming of Hedonism and Materialism (*Ibid.*, p. 536). This is seconded by N. Gonzales Caminero (*Historia Philosophiae*, Rome 1959, Volume I, p. 177).

[146] C. J. De Vogel says, "We have a rather large collection of 'gnômai' pf. Democritus, loose proverbs or maxims without any system", in *Greek Philosophy* I, p. 76. W. Jaeger: "Democritus' ethics are a mere parentheses" (*Paideia*, translated into Italian, p. 438).

[147] Willy Theiler, *Zur Geschichte der theologischen Naturbetrachtung bis auf Aristoteles*, Zürich 1925.

[148] Cfr. Giovanni Reale, Storia della filosofia antica, Volume I, p. 193.

[149] Archelaus is often grouped together with Theagenes of Reggio (Calabria), who was considered the Homeric religion's first apologist. Book XX of the *Iliad*, in which Homer describes the combat between the gods, led Xenophanes to his frontal attack on Homeric mythology. Theagenes took up the defence, introducing the allegorical interpretation, which was developed by Democritus and later by Philo regarding the Bible. Another allegorical interpreter was Metrodorus of Lampsacus, in the fifth century.

[150] M. Buccellato, "La polemica antisofistica dell'Eutidemo", in *Rivista critica della storia di filosofia* (1952), p. 95; T. Gomperz, Volume II, p. 226. Aristotle also called the seven sages Sophists (cfr. W. Ross, *Aristotelis fragmenta selecta*, Oxford 1958, p. 74).

[151] We should also mention the paradoxic theory of Dupréel (*Les Sophistes*, Neuchâtel 1948) which tends to attribute to the Sophists what history commonly credits to Socrates, with the result that Socrates would be merely a legend. I leave aside the eulogisers of the Sophists like K. Popper, who makes them a "great humanitarian movement" (*The Open Society and its Enemies*, translated into Italian 1973, p. 107), a "great generation", etc. These praises are echoed by Grote, Nietzsche, Schiller and others.

[152] For example, W. Jaeger holds the teaching of the "areté politiké" was not primarily proposed by the Sophists. Simonides of Ceos and Pindar had already made poetry an instrument of social formation. "The Sophists," he says, "were the last step. They translated the various genres of parenetic poetry in which the educational element was more obvious, into the form of prose with the poetry's educational content. . . This is the sign of its definitive rationalisation" (*Paideia*, *op. cit.*, p. 440). This thesis was also proposed by A. Levi ("Studi introduttivi sulla sofistica greca", in *Sophia* III (1937), pp. 191–211; IV (1938), pp. 325–356). And A. Covotti ("Per la storia della sofistica greca, Studi sulla filosofia teoretica di Protagora", in *Analisi della R. Scuola Normale di Pisa XII*, 1987), who considered the Sophists not educators, but the bitter fruit of politics. Therefore, he distinguished the Sophists from the politicians, and hence the Sophists Critias, the Thirty Tyrants, Euthydemus, Dionysodorus and Callicles are removed from his catalogue. In reality, as T. M. Antonelli observes ("I Sofisti in Platone", in *Giornale di Metafisica* I (1946), pp. 12–27), the Sophists and were effects and also causes of politics. Hence their responsibility as philosophers of politics, as we see in the fact that Critias, Gorgias and Protagoras were ambassadors.

[153] Gomperz admits that there were "compromises" (Volume II, pp. 219–220).

[154] On this subject, cfr. Gaetano de Sanctis, II pp. 224 ff. M. Pohlenz (*L'uomo*

greco, translated into Italian, pp. 349–350) concludes his historical diagnosis with the statement that Athens was ruined by egoism and partisanship.

[155] Cfr. Mario Untersteiner, "Sofistica e realismo politico", in *I Sofisti, Testimonianze e frammenti*, Florence 1949–1950.

[156] Cfr. G. Saitta, *L'illuminismo della sofistica greca*, Milan 1938, especially the chapter "Religion as negation and affirmation of humanity" (pp. 37–35). An important episode is that of a certain Diogenes of Melos, who threw a statue of Hercules on a fire, crying out in scorn: "So you will cover up the thirteenth toil".

[157] M. Untersteiner, op. cit., pp. 173 ff.

[158] Untersteiner's translation into Italian, *op. cit.*, p. 38. On the relations between Euripides and the Sophists, cfr. N. Petruzzellis, "Euripide e la Sofistica", in *Meditazioni critiche*, second edition, Naples 1970, pp. 323–356.

[159] Often Euripides is referred to as a tragic poet typically overflowing with Sophistic ideas. Without a doubt, to him Athens was no longer a city protected by the gods, and the problems of life are not resolved with faith in Zeus or in faith in Athena's protection, but in man himself. However, he is not the Greek "poet of illuminism". He has a faith in the gods, but it oscillates. Euripides' man is divided, more rationalistic and more dubious. The struggle between conscience and the thrust of the passions is the space where the human drama unfolds. While in Sophocles and Aeschylus man (nay, the hero) encounters faith, in Euripides it is the simple man who struggles against the irrational.

[160] M. Buccellato, "Per una interpretazione speculativa della retorica sofistica", in Studi di filosofia greca, Bari 1950, pp. 181 ff.; Livio Sichirollo, "Retorica, Sofistica Dialettica, Genesi della dialettica nel IV sec. a.C.", in Il pensiero VI (1956), pp. 52–71.

[161] A. Rigobello, "La Sofistica come intellettualismo strumentale", in Studia Patavina IV (1957), p. 112. Twentieth-century culture has created a new science of persuasion called "publicity", where the goal is to inform, to persuade and to delight. The three factors can be inverted to achieve different goals: either with the primacy of persuading over informing, or that of entertaining over that of informing, etc. Therefore, the Sophists are precursors of this art or technique of persuading, which belongs to pluralistic or democratic societies. In these societies, the problem of the truth of the word is substituted with the problem of persuasion. Persuasion requires mass psychology, while informing requires encyclopaedic knowledge; entertainment requires rhetorics or stylistics.

[162] M. Buccellato, "La polemica antisofistica dell'*Eutidemo* e il suo interesse dottrinale", in *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia* VII (1952).

[163] "Dissòi lógoi" were born as verbal gymnastics, imitating the physical exercises which took place in the city's gymnasia, particularly at Olympia. This gymnastic exercise developed into a style of life and debating battles. In

Sophocles' Aiax Theucrus and Menelaus duel in salacious disputes; in Aristophanes' *Cavaliers*, Cleon and his adversary confront each another with verbal thrusts; in the Frogs it is Euripides and Aeschylus' turn. In his *Refutational Discourses*, Protagoras uses the above models (cfr. M. Pohlenz, L'uomo greco, op. cit., pp. 816 ff). T. H. Robinson recently published a new edition of an anonymous collection of "Dissòi lógoi" (Contrasting Arguments, *An Edition of the Dissoi Logoi*, New York 1979. Cfr. Livio Rossetti, "Tra studi sui" "Dissòi lógoi", in *Studi Filosofici* III (1980), Florence 1982, pp. 28 ff.

[164] One of the principal supporters of this theory was Heinrich Maier, in his great study on Socrates (translated into Italian, vol. I, passim).

[165] See G. Saitta, who sees in the ability to teach political virtue a "more serious and profound" justification beyond "greed for money" (*op. cit.*, p. 102).

[166] M. Buccellato, *Sulla retorica sofistica*, art. cit., p. 184.

[167] Cfr. S. Zeppi, "L'etica di Prodico", in *Studi di filosofia presocratica*, Florence 1962, pp. 103–115. Hence T. Gomperz's correct definition: the Sophists were half professors and half journalists; or, as Nestle explains, "the Sophists had opened a school of political journalism in Athens".

[168] Carlo Mazzantini, "La Metafisica di Socrate", in "Giornale di Metafisica" I (1946), pp. 32–42; cfr. J. Lana, *Protagoras*, Turin 1950. Therefore, as Giovanni Di Napoli explains, Socrates' polemics against the false and mortifying statements of the Sophists, although those statements were always philosophical (*op. cit.*, p. 88).

[169] V. E. Alfieri, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

[170] Giannantoni's main argument is this: Capizzi took into consideration the second half of the famous fragment, "Man is the measure of all things, both those that are and those that are not" (quoted by Plato in the *Theaethetus*, 151 e, 152 c). But the first half remains in the shadows, which expresses the Protagorean agnosticism against which Plato reacted in the *Laws*. This reaction was the more elevated principle, "God is the principle of all things" (*Laws*, 715 e, 716 d). In quoting Protagoras, Plato seems to condemn the latter's "hybris" as a political man, but he does not make Protagoras a late Eleatic. The opinion of Carlo Del Grande (pp. 522–523) was more or less the same.

[171] A. Rostagni ("Un nuovo capitolo nella storia della retorica e della sofistica", in *Scritti minori* I, Turin 1955, pp. 1–49) affirmed that the anonymous writing of the fourth-century "Dissòi lógoi" is the source for later Sophistic situation ethics. This work, if not considered as belonging to Protagoras, represents the development of some of the teacher's ideas, even if he did not teach the Sophists' moral relativism. This is seconded by C. De Vogel, *op. cit.*, pp. 114 ff.

[172] Xeniades later said, "Everything is falsehood, both representation and opinion" (Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Mathem.* VII, 53). However, Gorgias had already stated that "the 'doxa' is the falsest of things" (Diels, B 11).

[173] Enzo Paci, *Storia della filosofia presocratica*, op. cit., p. 143.

[174] Klaus Oehler, *Die Lehre von noetischen und dianoetischen Denken bei Platon und Aristoteles*, Munich 1962. The author states, "Insofern freilich beginnt die Wesenerkenntnis mit dem Wissen des Namens" (op. cit., p. 61). The author also observes that in Plato, names and words ("onomata", "rhemata") in themselves are sounds from the lips, without being signs of predication. "Therefore," Plato observes, "there is never a discourse ("lógos") if one only states a sequence of names, nor when one states names without verbs" (*Sophistes*, 262 c). However, Plato, faithful to Socrates, also said that to deprive oneself of an instrument like the word "would bring irreparable harm; we would be deprived of philosophy" (*Sophistes*, 260 a).

[175] G. Giannantoni, "La pritania di Socrate nel 406 a.C.", in *Rivista critica di Storia della filosofia* XVII (1962), pp. 3–25.

[176] Xenophon, *Symposium* V, 5–10; cfr. Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy I, Greece and Rome*, translated into Italian, Brescia 1967, pp. 144 ff.

[177] Richard Kroner, *Speculation in Pre-Christian Philosophy*, Philadelphia, p. 133; cfr. T. Gomperz, *op. cit.*, Volume II, pp. 429–430. It should also be observed (from Plato's *Symposium*) that he did not retreat from unhealthy affection, nor was he averse to certain criminal forms of erotism (cfr. A. Banfi, *Socrate*, Milan 1943, p. 58), as we see from Xenophon's narrations (*Memorabilia* III, 11; *Symposium* IV, 10 ff.). Therefore, the lay literature which compares Socrates to Jesus should be taken with a grain of salt.

[178] V. De Magalhaes-Vilhena,' *Le Socrate historique et le Socrate de Platon*, Paris 1952, p. 13) holds that Aristophanes should be excluded from the sources because he was a comedian and because he was not Socrate's disciple; hence he is not credible.

[179] See the interesting essay of Livio Rossetti, "La 'questione socratica', un problema malposto", in *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia* (1982), first excerpt. For example, the author quotes a study of R. A. Wellmann, who stated with regard to the two sources of Aeschines and Xenophon, "Nothing in the fragments of Aeschines' dialogues, for example, appears seriously inconsistent with Xenophon" ("Socratic Method in Xenophon", in *Journal of History of Ideas* XXXVII (1976), p. 308).

[180] This, according to A. Rossetti, is one of the unexplored fields which could open new roads into the research of Socrates. The Author quotes the volume of Sir. K. J. Dover (Clouds *with Introduction and Commentary*, Oxford 1968).

[181] A sarcastic response to the depiction of Socrates is made in Plato's *Theaethetus*: "See him there, suspended in divine height! There he is in the high regions of air, looking down lost. Disturned, lost, stuttering: the object of laughter, certainly not the maid-servants of Thracias or another vulgar

ignorant. . .; object of laughter to men who have a spiritual formation opposite to that of servants" (*Theaethetus*, 175 d, translated by Turolla, Volume II, p. 682).

[182] Heinrich Maier, Socrate (translated into Italian, Milan 1943, two volumes), Volume I, p. 168.

[183] This reconstruction has a certain foundation: Xenophon recounts that Socrates was considered a "charlatan", "dreamer of dreams" and "beggar" (*Oeconomicus* I, 3).

[184] "Rilettura delle *Nuvole* di Aristofane come fonte per la conoscenza di Socrate", in *Rivista di filosofia neoscolastica* LXV (1973), pp. 532–550.

[185] F. Sarri, *art. cit.*, p. 550.

[186] Renato Laurenti (editor), *Senofonte*: *Le opere socratiche*: *Memorabili*, *Convito*, *Apologia di Socrate*, *Economico*, Padua 1961. Note that the "lógos sokratikos" is mentioned by Aristotle in the *Rhetoric* (III, 1417 a 20) as a "mimetic" literary genre. Hence, it is not rigorously historical, but parenetic and idealised.

[187] H. Maier, Volume I, *op. cit.*, p. 21. A different context for the "phileïn" is shown in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (I, 3, 13–14), in which the kiss is compared to the bite of a tarantula.

[188] H. Maier, Volume I, p. 62.

[189] Hermann Croust, "Socrates in the Light of Aristotle's Testimony", in *The New Scholasticism* XXVI (1952); cfr. also J. Luccioni (*Xenophon et le Socratisme*, Paris 1953) and L. Strauss (*Socrates and Aristophanes*, New York–London 1966).

[190] Cfr. H. Maier, who deduces from this fact that Xenophon, in editing the *Memorabilia*, made use of Plato and Antisthenes. The first book is historically authentic, while the discussions on the budget of Athens (III, 6), on the political and military situation (III, 5) and on the dialogue between Hippias and Socrates would be amplifications or inventions of Xenophon. Maier's thesis was seconded by J. Stenzel (the word "Sokrates" in *Pauly-Wissowa Real Enzyklopädie*), Schremp (*Sokrates*, Leipzig 1927), Kuhn (*Socrates*, Berlin 1934), Bastide, (*Le mouvement historique de Socrate*, Paris 1939) and Banfi (*Socrate*, Milan 1944). This hypothesis presents a semi-Sceptic Socrates, not the discoverer of the concept, but a simple researcher of ethical praxis.

[191] G. Zuccante, *Socrate*, Turin 1909, pp. 17 ff.

[192] *Ibid.*, p. 534; Copleston, *op. cit.*, pp. 148–149.

[193] We should exclude H. Maier's iconoclasm when he considers Aristotle's testimony of Xenophon, and thus doubly unfaithful (*op. cit.*, Volume I, pp. 80 ff.). This does not seem acceptable, as Herman Croust states: "Aristotle himself does not substantially add any material to that already covered by Plato and Xenophon. The Aristotelian testimony regarding Socrates on the whole is worthless, therefore, to the historian of philosophy" ("Socrates in the Light of Aristotle's Testimony", in *The New Scholasticism* XXVI (1952), 3, p. 365).

[194] As Gomperz (Volume II, p. 452) and N. Gulley (*The Philosophy of Socrates*, New York 1968) do in an exaggerated fashion.

[195] This is the hypothesis of Richard Kroner, who makes Socrates a misunderstood solitary genius, and hence turns Plato into a neo-Socratic (op. cit., p. 149). This hypothesis is opposed to the "English" one, where only the Platonic Socrates is historically acceptable. This latter affirmation is made by Burnet, Taylor, Ritter (*Sokrates*, Tubingen 1931) and others.

[196] T. M. Antonelli, "I sofisti in Platone", in *Giornale di Metafisica* I (1946), pp. 129–140, 308–316, 394–405. Already in the *Apology*, he makes it understood that his disciples were ready to defend him. In fact, we read this declaration: "Perhaps you, Athenians, will think that I have been condemned for a lack of able discourses. Nothing could be more mistaken!" (28 d).

[197] H. Kühn, *Sokrates, Ein Versuch über den Ursprung der Metaphysik*, Munich, translated into Italian 1969, pp. 86–110. For the minor sources, I recommend the study of F. Sarri, "Isocrate come testimone del messaggio socratico", in *Rivista di filosofia neoscolastica* LXVI (1974), pp. 40–58. The author mentions that from 404 to 399, Isocrates, although he was not a disciple, knew Socrates. After Socrates' death, he took a position against Plato and drew nearer to Gorgias. He also wrote a "lógos sokratikos", the "Busiris" which is an "accusation against Polycrates". He then opened a school in Athens in opposition to Plato and wrote the book entitled *Against the Sophists*. This attack was directed both against Socratics and the later Sophists for having abandoned Socrates' fundamental concept, the "epiméleia tês psychës". In 354 Isocrates wrote an *Antidosis* in defence of the "psyché".

[198] Cfr. H. Croust, *art. cit.*, pp. 119–135.

[199] E. Turolla, *Platone, I discepoli*, Milan 1953, I, pp. 736–737.

[200] R. Kroner, *op. cit.*, pp. 141–142; cfr. *Memorabilia* I, 1, 16.

[201] A certain whim describes the relation between Socrates and the Sophists in terms of dialectics: universal (Sophists)-particular (Socrates), as Banfi wrote (*op. cit.*, p. 61). "Socrates is the assertor and discoverer of personal individuality as moral substance" (*Ibid.*). And, there is the opposite view: particular (Sophists)–universal (Socrates), as H. Maier proposes. Their difference was bit in anthropology, but in their different orientation, because both worked from the same humanistic base.

[202] Cfr. Max Pohlenz, *L'uomo greco*, translated into Italian, Florence 1962, p. 391.

[203] Savino Blasucci, op. cit., p. 150.

[204] It is debated whether the profession of ignorance was sincere or fictitious. Maier, and Festugière (*Socrate*, translated into Italian, Brescia 1936, pp. 117–120) consider it sincere. A. L. Stefanini (*Platone*, Padua 1949, I, p. 20) considers the declaration sincere only in the questions regarding the origin and

nature of things (this is not treated with irony). Blasucci observes that the professed ignorance is not always sincere, but is part of his irony (*Ibid.*, p. 93). He often declares that he does not know, not because he does not know, but because his knowledge seems like ignorance to God (*Apology*, 23 a–b; *Lysis*, 218 a).

205 Cfr. M. Pohlenz, *L'uomogreco*, *op. cit.*, pp. 816 ff.

206 I would not agree with Ralf Dieter Hermann ("Il logos socratico e il linguaggio", in *Rivista di filosofia* LII (1961), pp. 279–294) that Socrates "used language in its communicative function as a social game" (*Ibid.*, p. 281), that when he debated "truth [often] did not interest him" (*Ibid.*, p. 279), and that "often he was not objective" (*Ibid.*).

207 Giuseppe Semerari, "Il principio del dialogo in Socrate", in *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana* (1953), pp. 448–449; Copleston, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

208 H. Maier, *op. cit.*, Volume I, p. 189.

209 This is the theory defended by J. Gould (*Development of Plato's Ethics*, Cambridge 1955), for whom "knowing how and knowing that" are two very distinct things. In the pre-Socratics (in his opinion), the word "epístasthai" means ability, just as in Bacchlides the "episteme" is equal to the "techne". All this tradition is reflected in Socrates, who was not a philosopher, but an able practitioner. This theory was amply refuted by J. M. Rist, *Eros and Psyche, Studies in Plato, Plotinus and Origen*, Toronto 1964.

210 Even more extreme is Adorno's thesis, making Socrates a man of pure problematics, not a philosopher of morals or of the concept. This theory was rejected by Gallo Galli (*Socrate e alcuni dialoghi platonici*, Turin 1958), who said that Socrates, even if he did not do research purely for research's sake, still based his message on a well-founded practical knowledge.

211 Carlo Mazzantini, "La metafisica di Socrate", *art. cit.*, pp. 32–42. In the *Apology*, he declares that for the just man "one thing must be considered true ("alethès dianoeîsthai", 41, c, d), that nothing evil happens, either in life or in death".

212 On the Socratic "demon" of "daimónion" (in the neutral, to indicate not a person, but a fact) a vast literature exists. We limit ourselves to mentioning the four most common interpretations: a) the *political* one of the Athenians, who probably traced from this their pretext to accuse him of having introduced new divinities; b) the *theosophic* one of Plutarch, Apuleius, many neo-Platonics and the Church Fathers, who understood the "demon" as a beneficient genius or angel; c) the *psychological* one, which is more recent and considers the demon a hallucination (Lélut) or somnambulism (Despine); d) the *ethical* one, which is our interpretation, according to which Socrates possessed a highly perfected and religious moral conscience. It is not important that Plato's version is slightly different from that of Xenophon. For Plato, the "demon" is a "word" (*Phaedrus*,

242 b), a "sign" of good, an interior oracle, a frequent, providential and prophetic manifestation ("he eoythia mantiké") which prohibits (Plato) or commands (Xenophon). See S. Blasucci, *op. cit.*, p. 195; Giovanni Bertin, "Socrate e le scuole socratiche", in *Grande antologia filosofica*, Milan 1954, pp. 153–154; G. Reale, *op. cit.*, pp. 346–352.

[213] Aristotle did not exclude slaves from the exercise of morals, yet he stated that women and children are capable of imperfect virtue (*Politicus* I, 5, 8). It is still held that the "enkráteia", which Socrates exalts as the queen of virtues, is a fringe of egoistic and antisocial Cynicism which entered into the sources. However, it is perhaps better to agree with G. Reale that the "enkráteia", as a primacy of the spirit over the passions and dominion of the will over instincts and animal nature, is connected with the idea of "soul", man's moral centre and the foundation of spiritual values (*op. cit.*, p. 321–326). The "enkráteia" is man's true interior freedom (*Memorabilia* IV, 5, 2); it is the "autarchia", or the conscious independence from animal needs.

[214] A. Ferro, *La filosofia di Platone* I, Rome 1932, p. 154. I would not agree with this author that Socrates' immortality of the soul is more an object of the "dóxa" than of the "epistéme". The alternative does not seem to regard the plane of rational knowledge, but of religious faith. However, the Platonic Socrates, as M. Sciacca affirms (*Platone*, Milan 1967, Volume I, p. 115), seems to possess an illuministic imprint, especially in the *Apology* (after death, the soul will either dissolve or change place. In the first case, the dead man "sleeps without dreams", which is a great achievement. In the second case, the soul will be able to converse with the great spirits in the other world, "supposing that what is said is true"). Hence this Socrates is different from the one depicted by Xenophon. In the *Memorabilia*, Socrates states that "God infused a most vigorous soul into man" (I, 4, 13); that it "perceives the existence of God", possesses memory and participates in divine nature (*Memorabilia* III, 3, 13–14).

[215] Cfr. R. Kroner, *op. cit.*, p. 143. Giovanni Reale insists on the importance of the discovery or accentuation of the "psyché" in Socratic teaching (*op. cit.*, Volume I, pp. 300–311). He refers to F. Sarri (*Socrate e la genesi storica dell'idea occidentale di anima*, Rome 1975). I would not agree in giving to Socrates what was indeed clarified by Plato.

[216] Regarding social and political ideas, it seems that Socrates identified law with justice (*Memorabilia* IV, 4). Therefore, obedience to civil laws is not differentiated from respect for the "àgraphoi nomoi" (*Memorabilia* IV, 4, 19), the norms which God established for all humanity. For example, some of those norms are the adoration of the gods, honouring one's parents, and conjugal sanctity. In the case of conflict between the two orders, Socrates opted for obedience to the positive norm, as the manifestation of the natural norm. Therefore, the State is the instrument of formation of the "good" man, just as obedience is the school of

virtue. However, Socrates' respect for positive norms has nothing to do with the doctrine of absolute Statism, as Protagoras held. He was indifferent regarding the forms of government, and he knew how to keep his independence both from tyranny and democracy.

[217] Socrates' religious character was described by A. Rigobello (*Il messaggio di Socrate*, Brescia 1957), Blasucci (*op. cit.*, p. 44), etc.

[218] K. Doering, *Die Megariker, Kommentierte Sammlung der Testimonien*, Amsterdam 1972. Note that Megara was Athens' eternal rival, and when Athens rose in power and glory, the Megarians were considered stupid, unrefined and crude. However, the Dorian Megara was the refuge of persecuted and fleeing Athenians.

[219] Hence we do not know whether Plato's following irony was directed at one or the other: "These amazing theories give the impression that here we have people full of admiration before stunning problems such as these are; people a bit scarse in their mental heritage, who believe to have discovered in these formulas the arcane supreme wisdom" (*Sophistes*, 251 c). Klaus Oehler believes that this attack was directed at Antisthenes (*op. cit.*, pp. 32 ff.).

[220] K. Oehler, *op. cit.*, pp. 35–39.

[221] Hence we can at the most give analogies of things. For example, since a universal concept of silver is not possible, I will be able to say that it is a metal similar to steel. In the case of an image implying a complex image, it suffices to enumerate the figurative elements. If things-images are always true, then we will never truly be able to use logic, saying, for example, that "man is good". All we can say is that "man is man", or that "good is good" (cfr. F. Capizzi, *Antistene*, *Studi Urbinati*, 1964, p. 51).

[222] G. Reale, Volume I, p. 398. It is not improbable that animals' conduct was taken as the ideal for human life (cfr. Gomperz, Volume II, p. 570).

[223] Cfr. Alberto Grilli, "Note critiche a Cratete cinico", in *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia* XV (1960), pp. 428–434.

[224] Renato Laurenti, "L'iponoia di Antistene", in *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia* XVII (1962), pp. 123–132.

[225] M. Detienne, *Homère, Hésiode et Pythagore*, Bruxelles 1962, pp. 65 ff.; C. J. De Vogel, *op. cit.*, p. 79. The theological allegory seems to have been introduced by Theagene of Reggio, and was accepted by Plato regarding Homer (*Republic* II, 378 d).

[226] Cfr. T. Gomperz, Volume II, *op. cit.*, pp. 604–605.

[227] On the Erethriac School, founded by Phaedo, cfr. Diogenes Laërtius II, 9, 105. It is not historically important and is left to the study of specialists.

[228] This is negated by T. Gomperz (Volume III, p. 41). However, note the fact that Plato was surrounded by scientists, such as Theodorus the mathematician

and Thaethetus, and that he occupied himself with astronomical and historical researches (as we see in the Philebus, Timaeus and Critias), and that in 368 the ranks of his disciples were joined by Eudoxus of Cnidus from Egypt (guest of the pharaoh Nectanebes). Hence we can easily believe that the Academy quickly became a type of University, with libraries and laboratories. A short time after the astronomer Callippus joined the Academy, and Aristotle mentions him with respect (Philip Merlan, "The Life of Eudoxus", in *Studies in Epicurus and Aristotle*, Wiesbaden 1960). Diogenes Laërtius' mention of Plato's voyage together with Euripides is an invention, because Euripides died in 407 B.C. (cfr. Copleston, *op. cit.*, p. 185).

[229] In 357 Dion left Athens with a group of exiles and moved on Syracuse, conquering it for a brief time. In fact, in 354 the Platonist Callippus, a traitor, assasinated Dion and permitted Dion to return to governing the city in 347. However, in 344 a certain Timoleon definitively expelled the tyrant; cfr. Kurt von Fritz, *Platon in Sizilien und das Problem der Philosophenherschaft*, Berlin 1968. The author writes to refute the radical affirmations of Karl Popper (*The Open Society and its Enemies*, 1950) which makes Plato a theoretician of dictatorship, the precursor of modern tyranny and intolerance, etc.

[230] The first attempt to classify them seems to have been made by Aristophanes of Byzantium (250–150 B.C.), who divided them into 5 trilogies. Dercillides (first century B.C.), who lived in the times of Julius Ceasar, and Thrasyllus, who lived in the times of Tiberius, opted for 9 tetralogies and also inserted 13 letters. Their merit is in having removed from the *Corpus platonicum* 10 dialogues, which they held to be spurious and written by students or later Platonists.

[231] Ancient librarians and philologists expressed their doubts; for example, on the *Hipparchus* (Aelianus) and the *Second Alcibiades* (Atheneus). Panaetius extended the doubt to the *Phaedo* itself.

[232] Luigi Alfonsi ("L'Assioco pseudoplatonico, Ricerca sulle fonti", in *Studi di filosofia greca*, Bari 1950, pp. 244–175) concludes his essay with the statement that the *Axiochus* can only be traced back to the times of Poseidonius, in the second century B.C.

[233] Some authors have considered the *Epimonides* an appendix to the Laws (J. Harvard in 1928 and E. Des Places in 1956), and hence a Platonic work. Carmelo Sorge ("Dottrine speusippee nell'*Epinomide* pseudoplatonico", in *Giornale di Metafisica* XX (1967), pp. 30–57) considers this the work of Platonists, contemporary to Aristotle's *Protrepticus* and inspired by this latter work. Moreover, the division of the sciences in the *Epimonides* is almost identical to the one proposed by Aristotle in the lost work *De Philosophia*, with polemical allusions to Isocrates. Sorge believes that the author was Speusippus himself, because of the fact that in the work we find support for some of Philolaus' theories, which were dear (albeit modified) to Speusippus.

[234] Regarding the paleographic field, the following mentions will suffice. A) *Codexes*: Parisinus (around 850 A.D.), which contains 5 dialogues; Marcianus (eleventh century); Bodleianus B, discovered by Clark on Mount Athos. There are also many manuscripts fro the time of Photius (ninth century). B) *Papyri*: Osyrinch papyrus from the second-third century A.D.; a Phaedo from the third century B.C. We also have the quotes of Eusebius of Caesarea (fourth century) and John Stobaeus (fifth century). C) *Latin translations*: Cicero (lost, save a few passages) and Marsilius Ficinus (1483). D) *Commentators* (mostly lost): almost all the neo-Platonists, both Greek and Latin. The important ones which have been preserved are Plutarch, Theo of Smyrna, Albinus, Apuleius, Chalcidius and above all Proclus. Note that Photius ordered the copying of Plato in the ninth century, based on lost sixth-century archetypes. The *Editio princeps* was edited in Paris by Stephanus Johannes in 1578, and is still obligatory today for quotes, even in translation.

[235] Joseph Zürcher, *Das Corpus Academicum*, Paderborn 1964. The author states that we can also attribute to Plato the outlines of the *Apology*, the *Crito*, both volumes of the *Hippias*, the *Hipparchus*, and some other Socratic dialogues.

[236] Cfr. C. Ritter, *Platon, Sein Leben, seine Schriften, seine Lehre*, 2 volumes, Munich 1910–1923, Volume I, pp. 194 ff.

[237] This is the critique of A. Diès (*Autour de Platon*, Paris 1927, p. 351), provoked by an attempt of M. Eberz (Würzburg, 1902), especially in reference to the *Philebus*, *Parmenides*, *Sophistes*, *Politicus* and *Theaethetus*.

[238] Lutoslawski collected, using the results of 45 previous philological studies, 500 stylemes. He distinguished these into *accidental* (if they appear only once in a dialogue), *repetitive* (a few times), *frequent or important* (if they appear more than once on two pages of Didot's edition), and *most frequent* (if they are indispensable). Working from the *Laws* as a point of reference, he formulates the law of stylistic affinity: "Of two works from the same author and of the same length, the closer one chronologically to a third work is the one that has more stylistic affinities in common with the third work. This under the condition that one takes into consideration the affinities' various significance, and that the number of observed peculiarities is sufficient to establish the stylistic character of all the works".

[239] *Ibid.*, p. 332, note 1.

[240] Julius Stenzel, *Kleine Schriften zur griechiscen Philosophie*, Darmstadt 1956, p. 39. According to this author, in the philosophical perspective one dialogue can explain another as two aspects of the same thing. See also L. Parmantier's critique (*La chronologie des Dialogues de Platon*, Paris 1913). There are other criteria to take into consideration, such as the scene of a dialogue, the personality of the interlocutors, the epoch and circumstances in which they are presented. In fact,

for psychological reasons, Plato was not able to introduce contemporary and living figures into his dialogues.

[241] David Ross, *Plato's Theory of Ideas*, Oxford 1951, p. 10.

[242] This canon, observed by Teichmüller (Breslau, 1884) has been accurately re-examined by L. Stefanini (*Platone*, 2 volumes, Padua 1940, Volume I, pp. LXXII–LXXXI). However, Diogenes Laërtius had already observed the diverse literary character of Plato, according to three forms. These forms are dramatic, narrative and mixed (III, 50). Helmult Kuhn proposes a different literary criterion ("Plato über dem Mensch", in *Die Frage nach dem Mensch*, Frieburg-Munich 1966, pp. 284 ff.). He distinguishes two types of dialogue: the dialogical mime in Socrates' form, and the dialogue of dialectic determination. In the first type, Platonic man is proposed as protection and affirmation of self; in the second, death and life await their assimilation into God. The relation between the two forms is tragic: the *Apology* and *Phaedo* (mime) end in the *Republic* and *Politicus* (dialectics).

[243] F. M. Sciacca, "La verità in Platone", in *Giornale di Metafisica* I (1946), p. 169.

[244] The main theories are: the *idealistic* one (Hegel), in which, for example, the Demiurge of Timaeus is the precursor of the "absolute Spirit"; the *Kantian* one, devised by the Marburg school, where the Platonic ideas correspond to Kant's a priori (Cohen, Natorp. This view was repeated by T. Ebert in "J. Sprute, Der Begriff der Doxa in der platonischen Philosophie", in *Philos. Rundschau*, 14, 1966, pp. 40–47, who negates that the ideas are real objects, and that they must be reduced to "pathémata", or forms of subjectivity); the *phenomenological* one on Husserl's models (P. Frysmann, *Platons Suchen nach einer Grimdlegung aller Philosophie*, Leipzig 1930); the *problematic and existential* one, where Platonic philosophy is reduced to a continuous research without goals (E. Grassi, *Il problema metafisico platonico*, Bari 1932; M. Heidegger, *Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit*, Bern 1947); the *neo-Positivistic* one (K. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies*, London 1945), according to which Plato was the theoretician of racism, tyranny, intolerance, etc.; the *psychological* one (Stewart), according to which Plato was an aesthetist and mystic; the *pantheistic* one (shared by many writers); etc. These views deserve credit for having deepened some aspects of Platonic philosophy, but they cannot be used as historic approaches.

[245] Cfr. V. Mathieu, *Questioni di storiografia filosofica*, Brescia 1975, Volume I, 1975, pp. 179–246.

[246] Giovanni Reale, *Storia della filosofia antica* II, *Platone ed Aristotele*, 3rd edition, Milan 1979, pp. 27–28.

[247] Luigi Stefanini, *op. cit.*, Volume I, pp. XXXIII ff.

[248] P. Friedlander, *Platon*, 2 volumes, Berlin, 1954–1957.

[249] Ambrogio Manno, *Il teismo di Platone*, Naples 1955.

[250] K. Feibleman, *Religious Platonism*, London 1955. The author observes that the Greeks, in contrast to Christianity and Judaism (who study God without passing through nature), must overcome the barrier of material reality. Hence their "probative" access, their attempts, their inquisitive philosophical method (p. 24), and their continuously evolving philosophy. Thus, Plato as a young man thought about the problems of this world, while in old age he thought of the after life (*Ibid.*, p. 22).

[251] This is Giovanni Reale's reservation about the evolutionary theory, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

[252] It is Aristotle himself who notes that Eudoxus, while in the Academy, introduced a certain Hedonistic theory in the solution of moral problems (*Nicomachean Ethics* I, 12, 1102 a). Just how Hedonism was able to enter the Academy's discussion is also explained by Aristotle, when he stated that the "hedoné" is identified with God and Good. This is the theme developed in the *Philebus* (cfr. P. Merlan, *art. cit.*).

[253] Leo Elders, "Saint Thomas et la diversité des opinions philosophiques", in *Doctor Communis* XXVII (1975), pp. 171–189. Plato, the author observes, is severe with those who use only the opinions of others to seek truth in itself (*Phaedrus*, 248 b). But Plato, like Aristotle, seeks debate "pour trouver mieux la verité" (p. 176).

[254] Julius Stenzel, *Kleine Schriften zur grieschischen Philosophie*, Darmstadt 1956. The author holds that in the *Philebus*, which has an ethical content, Socrates seems to behave as a historical witness, while in the *Laws* Socrates is placed in the periphery.

[255] P. Friedlander, *Platon*, Volume I, p. 172; see all of Chapter VIII, on the sense of the dialogue.

[256] In the *Parmenides*, philosophical inquiry is defined as a "fatiguing game"; in the *Phaedrus* (275 c) it is called a "serious obligation" and "fatiguing inquiry" (*Republic*, 536 a 10).

[257] ". . . das Selbstspräch der Seele von Platon nicht als Monolog, sondern als Dialog vestanden wurde" (*op. cit.*, p. 103). This is seconded by G. Krueger (*Grundfragen der Philosophie*, Frankfurt, 1958, p. 158). These authors work from the fact that the Greeks lived in a society, and that the community is a communion of speakers (*Ibid.*, p. 220). However, this argument "a priori" does not add anything; if science, politics and culture are also communal, is philosophy communal? Not necessarily, above all when the texts state, on the contrary, that it is a personal research.

[258] Quoted by Friendländer, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

[259] Hans Georg Gadamer, *Wahreiht und Methode*, translated into English, New

York, 1980, pp. 323–324. Seconding this thought is the above-mentioned Max Oehler.

[260] In the *Sophistes*, the Eleatic foreigner asks the Sophists: "In short, what do you mean when you say the word 'being'?" (224 a).

[261] H. Krämer, *Areté bei Platon uns Aristoteles*, 1963; *Der Ursprung der Geistmetaphysik, Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Platonismus zwischen Platon und Plotin*, Amsterdam 1964; *Ibid.*, *Platone e i fondamenti della metafisica*, Milan 1983. See also Egil Willer, *Der Späte Platon*, Hamburg 1970

[262] This thesis seems to be confirmed by a passage of Theophrastus: "In the fact that Plato related things to principles, it could seem that these were sensible things connected ("anápton") to the ideas, with the ideas bound to numbers. From the numbers one would ascend to the principles, and then descend through generation ("genesis") to the things which were spoken of" (*Metaphysics* III, 6 b 10–12).

[263] P. M. Schuhl, *La fabulation platonicienne*, Paris 1947; Yvon Lafrance, *Méthode et exégèse en histoire de la philosophie*, Montréal-Paris, 1983, pp. 77–97.

[264] There are many studies in this field: F. M. Cornford ("Mathematics and Dialectics in the Republic VI–VII", in *Mind* (1938), pp. 37–52, 173–190), P. Kucharski (in various studies between 1939 and 1949), Robin, P. M. Schuhl, and especially M. Vanhoutte (*La méthode ontologique de Platon*, Louvain 1956).

[265] For example, the return to the cavern in the *Republic*, 516 e, 518 a and 520, or the deduction of consequences from the more solid idea (*Phaedo*, 100 a 3), or the deduction from one idea to another (*Republic*, 511 b). Scientific deduction, and descending dialectics in general, are allowed only "de jure", "mais n'est pas réalisée en fait" (Vanhoutte, *op. cit.*, p. 70). The scientific method is one of those that is not "dialectic" (*Republic*, 531 e). It is descending, but without deductions in the strict sense. It can arrive at certain "hypotheses", but never at the "principle". It aims only for inferior results ("symbaínonta") (M. F. Sciacca, *La verità in Platone*, *art. cit.*, p. 242).

[266] Vanhoutte, *op. cit.*, p. 47, note 6; cfr. Egil Willer, *Der Spate Platon, op. cit.* This author refers to the *Phaedrus* (264 c) to demonstrate the validity of ascending and descending dialectics. Yvon Lafrance inquires about the relation existent between the method of "dianoia", an analytical method belonging to the sciences, and the method of "noesis", which belongs to dialectics. The relation is this: analysis is the induction and deduction through "hypotheses", or evident postulates, while the "nóesis" is the science of the principle, which is above every postulate ("anhypóthetos"). This means: a) that the philosophical method is not scientific; b) that dialectics are not mystical (Festugière), but a truly regulative knowledge of the "dianoia"; c) that the "dianoia" has its own intelligibility, which, however, is not supreme (*op. cit.*, pp. 91–97).

[267] Klaus Oehler states that the Platonic "diairesis" has the goal of verifying the validity of the "eidos" system (*op. cit.*, p. 123). In other words, truth comes before the "diairesis", or the purely exterior division of the meanings of current and commonly used words. The "diairesis" is the origin of purely subjective predication, while major dialectics is based on ontological participation in the ideas. The author refers to the *Thaeethetus*, where Plato verifies the truth of some propositions ("Socrates lives", "Socrates flies") by appealing to the effective truth of experience. Oehler's opinion is not convincing, for a simple reason: in the *Sophistes*, Plato states that the "diairesis" is the "paradigm of the major inquiry" (218 e). Therefore, it is the image and aid of descent. In Oehler's opinions, it should be stated that (as the author himself admits) ontology is ante-predicative and pre-logical. Still, this does not explain the "koinonia tôn genôn" of the *Sophistes*.

[268] A. Diès observes that the *Parmenides* does not contain the word "noûs".

[269] Therefore, it could be said that, in his philosophical inquiries, Plato can descend to the constructions of rhetoric, which were already known to Gorgias ("eikóta", "parádeigma", "tekmería", "enthymémata", "élenchos", etc.), that he contents himself with an inferior science (in the *Phaedo*, as A. Diès notes, the word "eikós" appears 12 times, "éoiken" 6 times, and "tekmeríon" 4 times – *op. cit.*, p. 414). Hence his work is a Socratic, disputational and approximative dialogue. Still, this is an expedient, with which Plato sometimes "sait défendre sa saínte verité avec les armes profanes de la rétorique" (*Ibid.*). However, Plato knows how to rise above dialectics with the symbolic discourse, which represents the step beyond the reasons of reason.

[270] Christian Friedrich Williger (a pseudonym for F. M. Sciacca), "Il 'paîs' di Cebete nel *Phaidon* di Platone", in *Giornale di Metafisica* I (1946), pp. 103–113. This youth is not one of the personages in the dialogue, nor is he irrational instinct, but the "reasons of faith" (*Ibid.*, p. 106). It is the intellect as faith in religious beliefs, on which are fundamentally based the two proofs of contraries and reminiscence (M. F. Sciacca, *Platone*, Volume I, Milan 1967, p. 171).

[271] A. Guzzo, *Il Fedone*, Naples 1926, p. IX.

[272] Hence F. M. Sciacca states that the religious motive here precedes the strictly speculative and philosophical one (*Platone*, Volume I, p. 178).

[273] Paul Friedländer, *op. cit.*, Volume I, pp. 186–218. According to the author, the three types of myths also describe Plato's philosophical curve (p. 219).

[274] Luigi Alfonsi, "I miti platonici", in *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia* (1946), pp. 197–225. The author states that myths are configured as a "doxa" of an ethical type, and are not at all subordinate to the "lógos".

[275] J. M. Stewart, *The myths of Plato*, Cambridge 1946. There is a subtle distinction not lacking in originality. Socrates had already admitted that when

mythology is immoral, it is necessary to use allegory ("hypónoia") to make the poets' repugnant narrations ethically acceptable. According to Stewart, Plato gave many of the myths rationalistic interpretations, in order to make them reasonable, hence making religious dogma philosophically acceptable. The non-allegorised myth would have no philosophical significance.

[276] Cfr. John M. Rist, *Eros and Psyche, Studies in Plato, Plotinus and Origen*, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

[277] Italo Mancini, "Profilo di una ermeneutica integrale", in *Ermeneutica e Tradizione*, Rome 1963, pp. 147–172.

[278] P. Frutiger correctly affirms (*Le Mythes de Platon*, Paris 1930), "Mythos' est employé sans aucune idée accessoire de fiction ou de legende" (*Ibid.*, p. 16). We know that Origen made use of this commonly accepted principle in defending the truth of the Bible. The account of the serpent and the tree of knowledge, etc., is truthful. Otherwise we would have to negate the value of the Platonic myths of Eros (*Symposium*), etc. The literary aspect is one thing, and the meaning (or "gnosis") of the Biblical account is something else (*Contra Celsum* IV, 39; PG XI, 1091). See below, number 166.

[279] L. Stefanini, *Platone*, Volume I, *op. cit.*, p. LIV.

[280] See E. Frank, *Plato and die sogennanten Pythagoreer*, Halle 1923, preceded by H. Diels (1899) and followed by W. Burkert ("Stoicheîon', Eine semiologische Studien", in *Philologus* 103 (1959), pp. 167 ff.). Also, see Oehler, *op. cit.*, pp. 134–135.

[281] Willy Theiler, *Zur Geschichte der theologischen Naturbetrachtung bis auf Aristoteles*, second edition, Berlin 1965.

[282] Kurt von Fritz, *Platon in Sizilien*, *op. cit.*, pp. 14–17.

[283] N. Abbagnano, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

[284] W. Jaeger, *Paideia* II, p. 354.

[285] T. Gomperz, Volume II, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

[286] Gilbert Ryle, *Plato's Progress*, Cambridge 1966.

[287] Paul Friedlander, Volume II, p. 10.

[288] Therefore, we will not take into consideration the "Socratic" dialogues, because they are partly or wholly irrelevant in the development of Platonic philosophy. They properly pertain to the study of Socrates.

[289] M. Buccellato, "La retorica sofistica negli scritti platonici. La polemica antisofistica dell'Eutodemo e il suo interesse dottrinale", *art. cit.*, 1952, p. 90. Plato branded "Sophistic mysteries" the use of homonyms, anphibology and orthoepy.

[290] Probably written after his first voyage to Italy (cfr. Turolla, *Vita di Platone*, Milan 1939, I, p. 125; *Ibid.*, Platone, Volume I, p. 603; A. Diès, *Autour de Platon*,

op. cit., p. 405). Diès defines this work "la plus éloquente protestation de la justice et de la verité qu'une plume païenne ait put écrire" (*Ibid.*). Gorgias died in 386; perhaps the dialogue was a commemoration for him.

[291] Plato offers a graceful division for the arts: true and adulatory. The true arts of the soul are the legislative art and the art of justice. The true arts of the body are gymnastics and medicine. The adulatory arts of the soul are sophism and rhetoric, while the adulatory arts of the body are cosmetics culinary art. Sophists then are artists of cosmetics and spiritual culinary arts.

[292] G. Fano's destructive critique of this dialogue is not convincing; the author states that the dialogue is unworthy of Plato because of the "annoying clumsiness" of the etymologies ("Il *Cratilo*", in *Giornale di Metafisica* (1955), pp. 307 ff.).

[293] Hence the forced interpretation Hans Gadamer imposed on the text of the *Cratylus* to make it a dialogue of his hermeneutic theory. Language is an implement which does not gather being, but a key revealing the relations of social communication (cfr. *Wahrheit und Methode*, translated into English, New York, 1980, pp. 357 ff.). However, this goes against Platonic texts and good sense. First we perceive things, and then we construct the expressive instrument called the word, so that (as we read in the text) it is possible "to know the beings without the names" ("matheîn àneu onomáton tà ónta", 438 c).

[294] This dialogue is the prelude to the great novelty of Platonic doctrine. Still, already in the *Gorgias* we can see evident signs of Pythagorean principles. According to C. De Vogel, there are seven of these signs: the doctrine of the soul, harmonic intervals, the idea of microcosmos and macrocosmos, the principles of order, the numbér, etc. (*op. cit.*, pp. 73–74).

[295] The Greek text is significant: "heorakyîa pànta tà chrémata he psyché". The importance of the *Meno* has been studied by many scholars. Grassi (*op. cit.*, pp. 70–72) sees in it the anticipation the hermeneutic theory of the unveiling of doubt which transforms itself into truth. However, he negates the cognitive value of inspired knowledge, which is "divine fate without mind". However, Turolla observed that myth is a particular "lógos", and this was seconded by J. Stenzel (*Plato als Erziher*, translated into Italian, Bari 1936, p. 94) and Stefanini, Volume I, *op. cit.*, pp. 110–111). Stenzel dedicates particular attention to the gnoseological difference between the "didàschein" and the "manthànein" of the dialogue, and concludes that learned knowledge is a prelude to dialectics (*op. cit.*, pp. 90–140). An even more detailed analysis was written by Konrad Gaiser ("Platos Menon und die Akademie", in *Archiv f. Gesch. der Phil.* 46, 3 (1964), pp. 241–292). He finds these undisputed Pythagorean elements: the definition of geometric figure ("schêma"), the study of the diagonal of the square and its not being commensurate, the geometric hypothesis of a surface within a circle (squaring of a circle?). The author states that the *Meno* represents the

transformation of an aporetic Plato into an "exoteric" Plato. The word "exoteric" had already been used by H. Krämer, but Stenzel wishes to modify it. The *Meno* is a dialogue born in the Academy, and it would not be improper to call it a "manifesto". It represents the metaphysical research which was to prop up Socratic ethics.

[296] Therefore, I would not agree in saying that in the *Phaedo*, the gnoseology of the ideas transforms itself into a mysteriosophic initiation (such initiations were practised in Greece in the fifth century) through the eschatological or super-rational motive, as P. Kucharski writes ("L'affinité entre les idées et l'âme d'après le *Phédon*", in *Archives de Philosophie* (1963), pp. 183 ff.). The reason is because eschatology is redeemed by the philosophy of ideas. Therefore, the contrary seems true: this is an eschatology which resolves itself in a gnoseology.

[297] The two preceding arguments of "ex contrariis" and "ex reminiscentia" are not taken into consideration here, because the former is based on cosmological philosophy, while the second depends on religious eschatology. The fact that there are three arguments, has been proven by H. Bonitz (cfr. G. Reale, *op. cit.*, Volume II, p. 115, note 1).

[298] Robert Loriaux ("L'être et l'Idée selon Platon", in *Revue Philosophique de Louvain* 50 (1952), pp. 5–55) with good reason debates with E. Gilson (*L'être et l'essence*, Paris 1930, p. 30), as Loriaux acquits Plato of essentialism. Plato's ideas are not merely abstract essences ("eíde"), but they also possess existence ("to eînai").

[299] G. Semerari, "Filosofia ed esistenza in Platone", in Riv. Intern. di Filos. del Diritto XXXI (1954), pp. 671–711. The opposition between the *Phaedo* and the *Symposium* is reconsidered by E. Hoffmann, *Platon*, Zurich 1950, p. 201.

[300] The theme of the dialogue is love: in mythology, as the oldest god (*Phaedrus*); in sociology, as the vulgar impulse of the two sexes (Aphrodites "pandémia") or as the celestial impulse (Aphrodites "urania"); in medicine, in its physiological aspect (Erisimachus); in comedy or symbolic and mythical poetry, with the myth of the androgyne (Aristophanes); in tragedy as the young, delicate, languid, just and wise god (Agathon). Plato, above and beyond these facile and banal solutions, "transplants", in the words of Diès, "the crimson rose of the philosophical Eros" (*op. cit.*, p. 35).

[301] Cfr. L. Robin, *La théorie platonicienne de l'amour*, Paris 1933, second edition. Robin (contrary to Zeller) states that the "eros" is not a demonic part of the soul, but a "demon", a god within us.

[302] J. Stenzel, *op. cit.*, p. 178. Therefore, properly speaking the "eros" is a "métaxy", an intermediary; not pure sentiment, but a germ which generates, but which is not generated being. It is preparatory and ceases when the soul sees (Robin, *op. cit.*, pp. 182 ff.). However, Robin does not reason well when he states

that what "is not 'logos' or 'epistéme'" cannot be an object of the soul. Still, it seems to me that the supreme act of contemplation is a global vision excluding "the discourse" ("lógos") or argumentation ("epistéme"). The supreme act is vision.

[303] It is important to affirm the transcendence of Beauty, against the temptations of a certain emanationist exegesis which degrades the Platonic "tò kalòn" to a subjective impression, or to a production of thought (cfr. J. Loriaux, *art. cit.*, p. 50).

[304] The ten books making up the work can be grouped into four great themes of politics; a) *the object*, or definition of politics as justice (Book I); b) *the subjects of politics* (three social classes – caretakers, warriors and artisans: educational preparation of the guardians or caretakers, Books II–III; tasks of the classes within the State, Book IV; forms of governance in the State, Book V); c) *political action* (Books VI–IX); d) *end of the State* (Book X).

[305] Plato announces the principle of the perfect correlation between metaphysics and gnoseology in the statement, "to mèn pantelôs òn, pantelôs gnostòn", or "the total being is totally intelligible" (477 a). Cfr. the excellent commentary of E. Turolla, "Il problema fondamentale del platonismo e il mito solare del VI della Politeia", in *Giornale di Metafisica* VIIII (1953), pp. 241–259.

[306] The classic work on Platonic ontology is that of D. Peipers, *Ontologia platonica*, Leipzig 1883 > In Plato, being is an idea which is; it is "tò óntos òn hò estin ón óntos . . . ousía óntos oûsa" (*Phaedrus*, 247 c; 249 c; etc.). It is total being ("pantelôs ón" – *Republic*, 477 a; "eilikrinôs ón" – *Ibid.*, 478 d); it is that which has always been ("to ón aeí" – *Timaeus*, 27 a), and it is invisible (*Republic*, 529 c). To conclude, the Platonic idea is being in its plenitude of existence, purity of being, eternity of being, immutability and invisibility.

[307] The solar myth appears in ancient religions: in India (human sight is bound to the sun! Cfr. H. Von Glasenapp. *Die Religionen Indiens*, translated into Italian, Turin 1963, p. 78); in Persia with the cult to the "Sol invictus"; etc.

[308] H. H. Berger, *Ousia in de Dialogen van Plato, Een terminologisch ondesoek*, Leyden 1961. The author (correctly, I think) states that Good does not negate existence. It is a "super-ousía" ("epékeina tês ousias").

[309] J. Rist, *op. cit.*, p. 51. But the author (incorrectly, I think) gives an abstract and mathematical meaning to Good, in opposition to the moral character of the "kalón" in the *Symposium*.

[310] Martin Heidegger in 1947 (while he was in Bern) dedicated a brief essay to these Platonic passages, entitled *Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit*, preceded by some mentions in his *Sein und Zeit*, 1927, no. 32 ff. and pp. 219 ff. In his opinion, these passages do not express an ontology, but a culture. Knowledge takes place in history, and hence being manifests itself not as objectivity, but as a gradual

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unveiling ("a-letheia", from "alanthâno"). What prisoners see is "true" (515 a); yet they see what is "more true" (515 d) when they are freed from their chains within the faint light of the cavern. In the third stage, outside the cavern, they see the "eide", which are not aspects of reality, but larger spaces of the soul. The "idea" is not objective existence, but a light of the soul which permits the unveiling of Good. When Plato states that there is a "yoke" ("zygón", or a bond – 508 a), he wishes only to state that knowledge terminates not with an object internal to thought, but with the historical "bond", the appearance, the act of unveiling. Truth is inside the yoke of the idea, and "to see the idea" ("ideîn idéan") means to abandon true being and enclose oneself within the "rectitudo" (conformity) or "adequatio intellectus ad rem". Therefore, in Plato we find two metaphysics, one of "existence" and one of "being", and two gnoseologies, the "truth of being" and the "idea of being". Now, this interpretation of existentialistic hermeneutics does not stand up to an attentive reading of the texts: a) the "idea" is not representation, but existence; b) the etymology "a-letheia" is not Platonic (cfr. the *Cratylus*, where "ale-theia", or divine flight, appears), but appeared in the second century A.D., in Olympiodorus' references to Plutarch, and in Sextus Empiricus; c) the terminus of knowledge is not "adequatio" or unveiling, but the idea as an actual truth ("pareschoméne", 517 c), which is being ("autò tò agathòn e toû agathoû idea"); d) the definition of truth in Plato is not ambiguous. It is logical (truth or falsehood of the judgement) and also (in other aspects) intuitive. For a refutation of Heidegger, cfr. Paul Friedländer, *op. cit.*, p. I, and especially Chapter XI, which is dedicated to the "alétheia".

[311] The sacred sense of the cavern is known in the history of religions; the cavern is the symbol of the world. Marret (1940) speaks of "speleoatry", or a cult of the cavern as an exercise for a consciousness of the earthly life's contingency. Cfr. Empedocles (Diels B, 120–121).

[312] Luigi Stefanini, *Il problema estetico in Platone*, Padua 1939, p. 62.

[313] G. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, translated into Italian,.Florence 1932, II, p. 153. See also the critiques of A. Chiappelli (*Sulla interpretazione panteistica della dottrina platonica*, Florence 1887) and Manno (*Il teismo di Platone*, Naples 1955, p. 192). Regarding the charm of Hegel's interpretation, cfr. E. Turolla, *Il Parmenide*, Milan 1942.

[314] Gilbert Ryle ("Plato's *Parmenides*", in *Mind* XLVII (1939), 190, pp. 129–157) gives various arguments for the rejection of Burnet's and Taylor's hypothesis. The Parmenides is not a derision of the Megarians, nor is it a derision of the Eleatics, In that case it would not be understandable why Plato included a stranger from Elea in the *Sophistes*, and how a Megarian is respectfully introduced in the *Theaethetus*. Nor can one say that the *Parmenides* was a medley of logical traps, because the historical Zeno did not consider them dull verbal games. Nor can one claim that Plato wrote the dialogue as a joke or to argue with the Sophists:

this would be the limit! And so forth.

[315] On the argument of the "third man", a name given by Aristotle, there is disagreement between G. Vlastos and Sellars (the latter being supported by Geach, Bluck, etc.). Is the idea a universal concept or a concrete individual, as in the case of a species (for example, Socrates, who is an example of the human species)? Vlastos correctly observes that the idea is not an example of a species, but is universal by nature.

[316] This led Plotinus (and later, Saint Augustine) to accept ideas as a thought of the Divine Intellect. In any case, Plato never understood the "noema" as thought thought, but as an immaterial reality. Meanwhile, Plato's contemporary, Alcimus (Diogenes Laërtius, III, 121) regarded it as a real being in the sensible world. Therefore, I would consider it excessive to say (as Gilbert Ryle did) that the dialogue as a whole is near to the philosophy of Hume, Kant and Russell, "and perhaps, more than any other, nearly the whole of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*" (*art. cit.*, p. 325).

[317] Vanhoutte, op. cit., p. 88.

[318] A. Diés, *op. cit.*, pp. XII–XIII. Dialectics are not only valid within the world of the ideas (as Loriaux states, *op. cit.*, p. 139), but also in sensible reality. Therefore, the reader should not be surprised if our interpretation is near to the neo-Platonic one. This is vigorously affirmed by Kroner: "*Parmenides* treats the deepest metaphysical, not only logical matters, and that in this respect the neo-Platonic interpreters and their predecessors came nearer to the truth than their opponents" (*op. cit.*, p. 181).

[319] The dialogue boasts fragments of rare beauty. Maieutics are explained; philosophy is explained as a stupor, and is affirmed that life is a certain escape from the world to divinise ourselves as much as possible (176 a); the duration of a perception does not guarantee its truth (160 b); being is captured by the soul (186 d); etc.

[320] The theme of the "doxa" is one of the most important in Platonic philosophy. It belongs to the decadent soul, which must use the horse "friend of true opinion" (*Phaedrus*, 253 d). This is not an individual notion, nor is it a complex of notions; its object is things in change (*Sophistes*). Therefore, it is bound to the ontology of participated and changing being, as described in the *Republic* (cfr. A.C. Diano, "Il significato della 'doxa' nella filosofia di Platone", in *Rivista di Filosofia* XLII (1952), pp. 167–185; A. Dies, *op. cit.*, pp. 472 ff.). It is debated whether the "doxa" is only apprehension, or judgement.

[321] C. M. Gillespie (1913), and recently Oehler, stated that this third form of knowledge or definition of knowledge is just an exposition of Antisthenes nominalistic theory. The "lógos" would not be a concept, but a name. Knowledge would not be a conjunction of subjects to predicates through a

copula, but an exterior combination of predicates present to the subject. There is no doubt that the *Thaeethetus* is a multifaceted dialogue which is difficult to interpret. It is probably that science in the *Thaeethetus* has a propositional, and not an ontological, character.

[322] Exegetes are divided on the meaning of being: is it a predicate or the supreme reality? Is it an existence of the ideas, or also of empirical reality? (cfr. V. Arangio Ruiz, "Le operazioni della dialettica nel *Sofista* di Platone", in *Studi di filosofia greca*, Bari 1950, pp. 233–244). De Vogel, F. M. Sciacca (*Platone*, Volume I, p. 436, note 76), and A. L. Peck ("Plato and the "mégista géne" of the *Sophist*, A Reinterpretation", in *Classical Quarterly* 46 (1952), pp. 32–56) support a meta-empirical being, while many others also extend the concept of being to inferior reality.

[323] J. Rist, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

[324] F. M. Sciacca, *Platone*, Volume I, p. 419. The discussion on the sense of nos. 237–264 of the dialogue is still lively today, and it is a true "crux interpretum". I quote only a few examples of authors who have debated against each other: K. Durr ("Die moderne Darstellung der platonischen Logik", in *Musaeum Helveticum* II (1945), pp. 166–195); R. Hackfort ("False Statement in Plato's *Sophist*", in *Classical Quarterly* 39 (1945), pp. 56–58); D. W. Hamlyn ("The Communion of the Forms and the Development of Plato's Logic", in *Philosophical Quarterly* 7 (1955), pp. 289–303); J. M. E. Moravesik ("Symplokè eidôn' and the Genesis of 'Lógos'", in *Archiv f. Geschichte der Philosophie* 42 (1960), pp. 117–129. The discussion regards whether the dialogue should be understood in a logical sense (as a problem of the predicability of genuses), or in a metaphysical sense (as a problem of the participation of the ideas-beings). The two aspects, as we shall see, are not mutually exclusive.

[325] Being in the Sophistes was understood in three ways: a) the ideas of the "pantelôs on" (Chiappelli, Stefanini, Zeller, Gomperz); b) God (Bertini, Fraccaroli, Lutoslawski in the sense of God's thoughts); c) being is idea and God in different perspectives (cfr. F. M. Sciacca, *Platone* I, p. 423). We agree with the third thesis. It should also be mentioned that the entrance of logic next to metaphysics is a great novelty. As L. Stefanini observes, "Thought, which up to then had been considered as being's presence to itself, here becomes another being . . . In the *Sophistes* (contrary to the *Phaedrus*), it is the "dianoia" as "symploké tôn ideôn" which becomes one of the genuses. Therefore, instead of resolving itself in a simple mirroring of beings, it adds itself to them with an autonomous function. . . " (*Platone* II, *op. cit.*, p. 260).

[326] Cfr. P. M. Schuhl, *Etudes sur la fabulation platonicienne*, Paris 1947, pp. 89–104.

[327] A. Manno, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

[328] There is a debate regarding the motive which led Plato to a consideration of

pleasure (the dialogue's central theme). Some say that this subject is the echo of the theories which Eudoxus had brought to the Academy (which were also mentioned in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* X, 2). Others (Eberz, 1902) identify Philebus with Philistus, Aristippus' disciple and teacher of Diogenes the Young; hence Plato's denunciation of the moral disasters provoked by Philistus' Hedonist education. Eberz also identifies Protarchus with Diogenes the Young. Others think that Plato was debating with the Atomists. One thing is certain; Plato demonstrated that pleasure is not good.

[329] Glenn R. Morrow (*Plato's Cretan City*, Princeton 1960), H. Kuhn, in the footsteps of F. M. Cornford (*Plato's Cosmology*, London-New York 1937) believe that the *Hermocrates* is one of the first three books of the *Laws*.

[330] This was the only book of wisdom in the Latin West from the fifth to the thirteenth centuries, in the form of Chalcidius' review.

[331] Even today it is debated whether the myth does not conceal a truth. Therefore, scholars hypothesise disappearing lands after an eruption (like Santorino island in the Aegean), or Heligoland in the North Sea, or the detachment of Brasil from the Guif of Guinea in remote times, or a submerged continent between the Americas and Africa, or even Atlantis itself. There are over two hundred works on the Atlantis!

[332] Cfr. F. M. Sciacca, *Platone* II, p. 133.

[333] The passage is obscure; it seems to be well-explained by A. Manno, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

[334] Cfr. M. F. Sciacca, Volume II, *op. cit.*, p. 160. For mathematics in Plato, cfr. Attilio Fraiese, *Platone e la matematica nel mondo antico*, Rome 1963; B. Russell, *Filosofia occidentale*, translated into Italian, Volume I, Milan 1971, pp. 287–298.

[335] M. F. Sciacca, *Ibid.*, p. 141–193.

[336] It has been observed that the Platonic geometric scheme is very close to contemporary atomic physics, more so than to Democritus' theory.

[337] Hence Plato's mythical explanation: "These theories are certain and conform to truth only in the day in which God will be able to ensure them" (72 d).

[338] "Whoever wishes to be the perfect Caretaker of the State must not only be able to turn his gaze to the plurality, but he must also lean toward unity. Nor is this latter the only element, because one must acquire knowledge of it. When our caretaker is in possession of this knowledge, with the vision of the one, he will have to subordinate everything else according to the opportune order, thus embracing everything insofar as it is synthetic" (965 d), and he will be religious, because he will participate in the divine (966 d).

[339] Helmut Kuhn, "Platon über den Menschen", in *Die Frage nach dem Menschen*, Freiburg-Munich 1966, pp. 284–309.

[340] F. M. Sciacca calls this argument the "ontological proof", insofar as the

soul is a totality, together with the two parts which are co-essential with it. It is not the "forma corporis", but a complete substance (*Platone* I, p. 137). Obviously, Plato intends to say that the soul is not inert, as the ideas are, since the latter are pure "paradigms". Incidentally, it should be noted that in the *Symposium*, immortality is bound to sensible love, which, with its generation, produces the "perennity" of the species. Next to this proof, Plato inclines love toward that which always is. Therefore, Stenzel's naturalistic exegesis is only partial (for further details, cfr. A. Manno, *op. cit.*, p. 342). How can it be said (as Stenzel affirms) that Plato's being is the "ego" of "the spiritual community" (*op. cit.*, p. 235–253)? How can we say that in Plato there is no "individual consciousness of personal sentiment, because Plato lacks the concept of intimacy. Everything is social in Plato" (*Ibid.*)? How partial is his interpretation of freedom! (cfr. F. M. Sciacca, *Platone* II, pp. 311–314).

341 Philosophers discuss whether Platonic ethics are a function of politics (which we prefer) or if, on the contrary, politics are a function of ethics, as G. Reale states (*op. cit.*, Volume II, p. 173). One defence, albeit contested, of Plato's intellectualistic ethics has been proposed by F. Chiereghin, *Implicazioni etiche della storiografia di Platone*, Padua 1977.

342 Let us briefly review the principles of Platonic gnoseology, as they are proposed (with variations that do not differ substantially) in the *Gorgias*, *Protagoras*, *Phaedo* and *Republic*. In addition to the "noesis", a type of knowledge which is called "doxa" exists, whose object is apparent being, according to the conditions of the soul. Truth will be revealed to us only in the judgement of God (*Gorgias*, 523 e). Two problems arise: a) what is this apparent being from which we must liberate ourselves? and b) what is the relation between apparent being and authentic being? Apparent being is made up of the changing object, more than of the cognitive act. Hence there is a fallacious "doxa", based on sensation, which lacks a gnoseological criterion and rational verification. There is a positive, or "right", opinion, which is not yet science, but close to it (cfr. Carlo Augusto Viano, "Significato della 'doxa' nella filosofia di Platone", in *Rivista di filosofia* XLII (1952), pp. 167–185).

343 Therefore, F. M. Sciacca states that in Plato there are two ethics, one with the body and one without the body. But they would not be opposed (Volume I, p. 157), and hence Rist repeats that the "second" morals are religious (*op. cit.*, p. 156).

344 Cfr. J. Gould, *The Development of Plato's Ethics*, Cambridge 1955. The author reaches the tragic consequences of Platonic political doctrine. Not only do private opinions not have any importance, but the same holds for religious matters, which are repressed. This deduction will be repeated by K. Popper, as we will say later, but in an erred perspective.

345 M. Gentile, *op. cit.*, p. 19; cfr. I. Luccioni, *La pensée politique de Platon*, Paris

1958, p. 105, and P. M. Schuhl, *L'oeuvre de Platon*, third edition, Paris 1962, p. 133.

[346] Karl Popper, as we have seen, wrote his anti-Platonic invective under the context of the pressures of Nazism. He was contradicted by various authors, among them H. von Fritz (*Platon in Sizilien*), as we have said (cfr. number 105, note 2) and N. Petruzzellis (*La crisi dello scetticismo*, Milan 1983).

[347] As was written by D. Faucci, "La morale e la politica in Platone", in *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana* XXXI (1952), pp. 129–161.

[348] In the *Politicus*, the origin of the State is explained differently. The "polis" is the emanation of divine government. In the *Laws*, authority is established to eliminate the quarrels between private persons.

[349] W. Jaeger (*Paideia* II, translated into Italian, p. 446) makes the Platonic State a great institute of instruction whose task would be to educate perfect citizens. This thesis was rejected (correctly, I believe) by Max Pohlenz (*Der hellenische Mensch*, translated into Italian, Florence 1962, p. 435), as overly based on modern individualism. Pohlenz underlines the "social" and aristocratic character of Platonic theory. Not riches, nor power (Pericles), nor culture and science, but social morality rests at the centre of Platonic ideals.

[350] J. Stenzel, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

[351] Cfr. Diés, *op. cit.*, p. 475; Gaetano Capone Braga, *Il mondo delle idee*, second edition, Milan 1954, pp. 1–113; A. Manno, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

[352] Hence A. Manno said that Platonic theism is almost Christian; the only thing lacking is the affirmation of absolute, and not relative, creativity.

[353] ". . . Orphic writings pulled Plato (or Socrates) out of his true path a little, and in his efforts to abstract the philosophy from theology and the methodology, he gave more emphasis to the Ideas than to receptacle, and error which Aristotle tried to correct. . ." (*op. cit.*, p. 65).

[354] D. Ross, *Plato's Theory of Ideas*, Oxford 1951, Chapter XXI.

[355] C. J. De Vogel, *op. cit.*, pp. 202 ff.; cfr. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I, 6; cfr. Diogenes Laërtius III, 25).

[356] F. M. Sciacca, *Platone*, Volume I, pp. 193–197.

[357] A. Manno, *op. cit.*, p. 298. Therefore, Diès expressed his perplexity on this point in the following terms: "Le degré de la divinité est proportionel au degré d'être; l'être plus divin est donc l'être le plus être, c'est l'Etre universel ou Tout de l'être (*op. cit.*, p. 556). Second difficulty: "Le Tout de l'Etre est a la fois Etre et Pensée, Intelligible et Intellect? Mais l'Etre est anterieur à la Pensée, et c''est l'Intelligible qui crée l'intellect: c'est parce que son object est supremmement divin que le sujet suprem est dieu" (*Ibid.*, p. 561). Third difficulty: "Il n'y a d'être vrai que dans l'Etre intelligible où le Dieu et le reste n'a d'être qu'autant qu'il participe, mais ce reste est dieu et divin dans toute la mesure où il participe à l'être intelligible" (*Ibid.*, p. 565).

[358] G. Soleri, "Le dottrine teologiche", in *Rassegna di scienze filosofiche*, Bari 1958, pp. 29–30. The dilemma was already proposed by Eduard Caird (*The Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophy*, Glasgow 1904, 2 volumes). The author works from the discordance between religion and philosophy (I, pp. 8 ff.) insofar as it is "ancillary". Near the end of Volume I, he proposes a dilemma: either religion, and subsequently the immanence of God; or philosophy, and hence transcendence (pp. 257–259). Therefore, we have either mysticism or dualism. However, in the author's opinion, this dilemma weighed heavily on the shoulders of all later theology, even Christian theology. However, in my opinion, this dilemma is rather artificial, because for Plato the divinity is always the object of religion, as opposed to Aristotle, as we shall see.

[359] Ingemar Düring observes (*Aristoteles, Darstellung und Interpretation seines Denkens*, translated into Italian, Milan 1976, p. 15) that until Aristotle, students contented themselves with being their teachers' "listeners", both because pergamenes cost too much and because of the ancient tradition of listening. Aristotle distinguished himself from other students in his assiduous reading of books or personal notes. On the one hand, this confirms the Platonic method of a severe teaching style with few discussions, and, on the other hand, the new critical attitude toward the ideas of others which Aristotle initiated.

[360] *Ibid.*, p. 50. According to Düring, the glory of Aristotle began after 30–20 B.C. with the publication of his scholastic works or treatises in Rome. From Rome, his works spread rapidly in various editions, which explains the rebirth of the Commentators in the second century A.D.

[361] Antonio Russo, *La filosofia della retorica in Aristotele*, Naples 1962.

[362] The accusation of atheism seems to have been made by Isocrates' school (cfr. W. Ross, *Aristotele*, translated into Italian, Milan 1946, p. 9).

[363] J. Düring, "Aristotle in the Ancient Biographical Tradition", in *Studia Graeca et Latina Gothenburgensia V*, Goteborg 1957, testim. 58 b and 59, pp. 373 ff. We also note a certain Theocritus of Chios, who joked about Aristotle in the following epigram: "Aristotle, an empty head, raised the empty monument to the eunuch Hermias, slave of Eubulus, who, being the slave of excessive greed for food, preferred to live in the mouths of the Borborus instead of in the Academy" (Diogenes Laërtius V, 11). Here the Borborus means in the mud, near Pella.

[364] Düring (*op. cit.*, p. 56) does not seem very favourable to this work's authenticity. Yet, Clement of Alexandria, in his Stromata (170, 3), mentions the "Constitution of Locri", in which Aristotle states that Zaleuch received law from Athens. This is an evident sign of the commonly held conviction of the second and third centuries that Aristotle had collected a certain group of Constitutions.

[365] See Walter Burley (1274–1345?), an English professor of theology in Paris from 1324 and the author of a *Liber de vita et moribus philosophorum* (cfr. Augustin

Una Perez, *Un pensador del siglo XIV, Walter Burley, Notas sobre su vita, obra e influjo posterior*, Escorial 1977, p. 178). However, a century later a certain Amplonius Ratinkh de Berka rejected his excessive hypothesis.

[366] But Düring seems excessive in including Book Kappa of the *Metaphysics* and the *Historia animalium* in the group of uncertain works.

[367] Paul Moraux, *Les listes anciennes des ouvrages d'Aristote*, Louvain 1951, *passim.*

[368] Cfr. Paul Moraux, *op. cit.*, *passim.*; *Ibid.*, *À la recherche de l'Aristote perdu*, *Le dialogue* Sur la justice, Louvain 1957, p. 13. However, see also the reservations of G. Soleri, "L'Aristotele perduto, Alla ricerca del dialogo sulla giustizia", in *Rivista di studi classici*, 1958, excerpted. It should be observed that the "exoterikòi lògoi" should perhaps be identified with the "circular volumes" ("enkyklia") (*Nicomachean Ethics* I, 5) which proceeded in the form of academic disputes ("thesin phylátton"). Opposed to this view is J. Düring, *op. cit.*, p. 626. See the very detailed study on the sources, bibliography and doctrine of Helmut Flashar, *op. cit.*, pp. 177–457.

[369] In 1960 in Greece passages were discovered from Photius' *Lexicon*, a work which led to the vigour of Aristotelian studies in the tenth century.

[370] Today, when we quote the works of Aristotle, we follow the numbering of pages, columns and lines from the edition published by the Prussian Academy, Berlin 1834.

[371] Cfr. W. Ross, *Aristotelis fragmenta selecta*, Oxford 1958, Volume I, p. 73. The denomination of "dialogues" can be traced back to Proclus (*Ibid.*, p. 77).

[372] We have simplified the question for didactic reasons. Still, the question of the chronology of Aristotle's works remains a difficult problem.

[373] Jaeger, as we shall see, distinguishes three evolutionary moments in Aristotle's thought: a) the Platonic period from 367 until about 355; b) the critical period, culminating with the publication (perhaps in Asia) of *De Philosophia*; c) the positivistic period from 335 until his death.

[374] W. Jaeger, *Aristotele. . .*, p. 36.

[375] Cicero, *De divinatione* I, 25. According to Jean Pepin (*Théologie cosmique et théologie chrétienne*, Paris 1964, p. 204) and S. Mariotti ("La 'quinta essentia' dell'Aristotele perduto e nell'Accademia", in *Rivista di Filologia e istruzione classica* 68 (1940), pp. 179–189) state that the dialogue's proof of immortality is tied to the Platonic canons of the "autokíneton" in the Phaedrus, as would result from a quote of Psellus. However, During drastically rejects any "traditional opinions" about the *Eudemus*. For example, it would not be true that here Aristotle refers to the argument "ex reminiscentia". The *Eudemus* was supposedly not written in the form of theses (*op cit.*, pp. 624–626). Still, Düring accepts that in the lost dialogue, Aristotle did not reason in a naturalistic way about the soul.

[376] W. G. Rabonwitz, *Aristotle's* Protrepticus *and the Sources of its Reconstruction*,

Preduman K. Joseph Dhar

Paris 1958) objects that it is necessary to demonstrate with plausible arguments that Iamblichus borrowed generously from Aristotle. Based on this, "tot protreptici quot professores". Düring did perform a true study on Aristotle's and Iamblichus' vocabulary, with the results indicating a great similarity. Out of 6400 words only 700 were different, and only 12 were not Aristotelian; even the style was Aristotelian, and the method was similar.

[377] P. Wilpert, *Zwei aristotelische Frühschriften über die Ideenlehre*, Regensburg 1949, and other essays.

[378] I. Düring, *Aristotele*, pp. 215–220. Jean Pepin, who is in partial agreement with Düring, bases his opinions on the testimony of Sextus Empiricus (who reproached Aristotle for reducing divinity to the place and terminus of the Universe), Hippolytus of Rome (according to whom Aristotle divided the universe into three parts: the sub-lunar part, without providence; the second portion between the moon and the periphery of the Universe, the kingdom of providence and divine governance; and a third region of the quintessence), and the *Vita marciana*. Pepin holds that this astral theology can only be attributed to the *De Philosophia* (*op. cit.*, pp. 61–70).

[379] Among the studies on De Philosophia, we have the learned work of M. Untersteiner, *Aristotele*, *Della Filosofia*, Rome 1963; cfr. also E. Berti, *La filosofia del primo Aristotele*, Padua 1962, which re-examines the lost writings. Cfr. the beautiful fragment we have from Cicero, *De natura Deorum* II, 37, which is the myth of the overturned cavern.

[380] We do not whatsoever consider Aristotle's youthful dialogues, probably written during Plato's life and modelled on the works of that school. Only the titles have been preserves of these works: Symposium, Politics, Sophist and Menexenus.

[381] Dario Composta, *Il libro XII della* Metafisica *di Aristotele*, Turin 1960, p. 47.

[382] Paulus Siwek, *De Anima*, Rome 1965, p. 16. Therefore, the author is correct in dismantling Nuyen's hypothesis, who in turn had taken on Jaeger's hermeneutics for the exegesis of Aristotle's *De anima*.

[383] Cfr. Giovanni Reale, *Teofrasto e la sua aporetica metafisica*, Brescia 1965, *passim*.

[384] From studies done by D'Arcy Thomson and H. Lee, we see that 102 locales are mentioned in the *Historia animalium*, of which 17 are in Mesias, 19 in the rest of Asia Minor, 12 in Macedonia (these locations recur 93 times). Only 25 of the places are in Greece, 14 in Europe, and 6 in Lybia and Egypt.

[385] Giovanni Reale, *Il concetto di filosofia prima e l'unità della* Metafisica *di Aristotele*, second edition, Milan 1967, p. XIII. In Volume II of his *Storia della filosofia antica*, the author observes that Aristotle never intended to publish his works. This indicates that he was able to revise them, in which case there should

be no chronologically determinable strata distinguishable. The historical-genetic method "does not at all resolve the difficulties posed by the reading of the *Corpus aristotelicum*, but multiplies the difficulties improbably" (*Ibid.*, p. 248).

[386] G. Reale (Aristotele, *La Metafisica*, Volume I, Naples 1968, p. 189) states that there are 26 arguments. However, he adds that the number of arguments has only a relative importance.

[387] About *De Philosophia* Cicero already wrote: ". . . Aristotelesque in tertio de philosophia libro multa turbat a magistro suo dissentiens" (*De natura Deorum* I, 13).

[388] Cfr. also Enrico Berti, *L'unità del sapere in Aristotele*, Padua 1965, pp. 49–64.

[389] Plutarch (*Adver. Col.* 14, 1114 f–1115) had already noted Aristotelian critique in the "exoteric" dialogues, as did Proclus (objections against the "hypothesis of the ideas") and Syrianus. However, Syrianus does not say that Aristotle did this violently and enviously. As Pepin explains, these were more interrogations than attacks (*op. cit.*, p. 498). However, then it would be better to say that the first critic of the doctrine of ideas was Plato himself, as Diès affirms (*Autour de Platon*, op. cit., p. 298). This is why Aristotle, in rejecting Eudoxus' Hedonistic theories, quotes Plato in his own favour. Instead, when he criticises some of Plato's affirmation in the Philebus, he uses the plural "they say", "then they", etc. (*Nicomachean Ethics* X, 3 1173 b), as a sign of respect.

[390] G. Reale, *Storia della filosofia antica*, Volume II, p. 250.

[391] W. Jaeger, *Aristotele*, p. 257. But Jaeger makes the later Aristotle an "antiquarian", as Ross jokingly wrote.

[392] Cicero states, ". . . nihil enim inter Peripatecos et illam veterem Academiam differebat" (*Academics* I, 4).

[393] S. Claghorn, *Aristotle's Criticism of Plato's* Timaeus, The Hague 1954. On the other hand, note that Aristotle proclaims himself to be a Platonist, with the succinct "We Platonists affirm . . . " (*Metaphysics*, 1086 b 18–19; cfr. Jaeger, op. cit., pp. 247 ff.).

[394] For example, it has been observed how the study of the chameleon, as it is described in *De generatione animalium*, presupposes vivisection (cfr. I. Düring, *op. cit.*, p. 571). However, this should perhaps be attributed to an insertion from Theophrastus or of the school in the original text (*Ibid.*). This appears more clearly in Book X, which would correspond to the *De non gignendo* of Diogenes Laërtius' catalogue. However, it is surprising to read minute descriptions (*Historia animalium*, *De partibus animalium*, *De motu* (or *Incessu animalium*), *De generatione animalium*). For example, there is a section on the division of vertebrates and invertebrates (which would have no blood). The vertebrates are subdivided into mammals, amphibians, birds, fish and serpents. Among the invertebrates, he mentions crustaceans, testaceans (such as shellfish, snails, sea lions, starfish, some

ascicie and some sea anemones. Regarding organisms, he comparatively analyses organs and grades of composition: tissues, blood, fat, sebus, marrow, brain, flesh and bone. For example, there are studies on the sterility of mules and the reproduction of birds, fish, cephalopods, insects, bees and testaceans, the distinction between cetaceans and fish, etc. For his diligent scrutiny, Sudas and Atticus (*In Eusebius* XV, 809) called Aristotle "the secretary of nature, who dipped his pen in intelligence" (quoted by Düring, *op. cit.*, p. 579), based on his enthusiasm for scientific research even of the humblest animals. Indeed, he held the "beauty" is found in all works of nature, and that in these works there exists a dominance of order, finality and hierarchy, not chance (*De partibus animalium* I, 5). The "telos" of nature and its functioning ("poeîn") are the goal of his scientific research. Therefore, it seems correct to state that Aristotle devoted an inexact method to his study of nature. Düring states, "To our eyes, it is absolutely obvious that the biological sciences are different from the theoretical natural sciences. Instead, Aristotle had not yet discovered this distinction (*Ibid.*, p. 484). Another limit of his studies is his data. Rarely does he use an autopsy, but he received information from hunters, fishermen, beekeepers, veterinarians, etc. He also accepted data from his precursors, such as Herodotus, Alcmeon, the Ionians, Empedocles, and naturally from Theophrastus, Philistion and Democritus.

[395] Cfr. Enrico Berti, *L'Unità*, p. 114. The author observes that Aristotle treated philosophy like biology, in that he made it the object of very detailed studies, but without giving it a method. Cfr. J. M. Le Blond, *Logique et méthode chez Aristote*, Paris 1939. In *Metaphysics* VI, 1, Aristotle admits that there exists a general discipline and special sciences concerning every type of knowledge; for example, in general mathematics and arithmetic. Metaphysics is different from this and other sciences, insofar as it is not only an "epistéme", but possesses principles not taken by other sciences. Moreover, it is based on the "noûs", and hence is also "wisdom" (*Nicomachean Ethics* XI, 1059 a 31–32).

[396] Aristotle adds that this seed of truth reaches maturity in dialogue with others (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1172 b 35; cfr. Gerard Verbeke, "Philosophie et conceptions philosophiques chez Aristote", in *Revue philosophique de Louvain* (1961), pp. 405–430). Therefore, Aristotle said, "One must be grateful to all, both those to whom we communicate in opinions, and to those who express themselves in a superficial forms. Even these latter have benefited us" (*Metaphysics* II, 1 993 b 20). He does not give credit to myths (in the *De Coelo* he rejects the myth of Atlantis - 284 a 18). At the most, myths are useful as expressions of philosophical contemplation (*Metaphysics*, 1074 b 1–14; 982 b 18; *De Coelo*, 270 b 5). In one fragment, he states, "The more solitary and isolated I am, the more I feel myself attracted by myths" (fragment 668, Rose). Here myth has the significance of stimulating a deeper philosophical reflection, and assumes the testimonial of stupor and of attempting to overcome the fantasy (*Metaphysics* I, 982 b 18–19).

[397] Pierre Aubenque, *Le problème de l'être chez Aristote*, Paris 1962, pp. 295–302.

[398] E. Berti, *L'Unità*, pp. 158–161; cfr. also C. Natali, *Cosmo e divinità – La struttura logica della teologia aristotelica*, Aquila 1974, pp. 71–72, 107, 116–116.

[399] Anticipated in Book XI of the *Metaphysics*, 1064 a 36 b, where Aristotle declares the wish to "attempt to demonstrate" the existence of immobile substances ("peirasómetha deiknynai"). This he does in Book XII, 6 (cfr. G. Reale, *Il concetto di filosofia prima*, p. 243; H. Bonitz, *Index aristotelicus*, reproduced in Berlin 1961.

[400] Aubenque establishes an oposition between the metaphysics of being in general (of being insofar as being) and the metaphysics of supreme causes. Hence he creates an uncrossable abyss of infinite doubts.

[401] W. Jaeger, *Aristotele*, pp. 555–556; cfr. G. Godin, "L'admiration, principe de recherche philosophique", in *Laval Théologique et philosophique* 17 (1961), pp. 213–243.

[402] In the *Metaphysics*, 981 a–b, Aristotle divides the sciences according to man's historical development. At first man tends to provide for elementary needs (hence the useful arts and occupations: agriculture, milling, making of implements, etc.). Then man cultivates the fine arts (painting, sculpture, literature, etc.). Finally, he turns to pure wisdom, which is science and philosophy. In the Nicomachean Ethics, basing himself on De Philosophia, he introduces five types of wisdom, adding to the two mentioned above: political science, physics and finally true wisdom (cfr. Carmelo Sorge, "Dottrine speusippee nell'Epinomide pseudo-platonico", in *Giornale di Metafisica* XXII (1967), pp. 30–37.

[403] L. M. Regis, *L'opinion selon Aristote*, Paris-Ottawa, 1935.

[404] For example, cfr. Carlo Natali, *op. cit.*, pp. 3–35.

[405] This is competently studied by Leo Lugarini, *Aristotele e l'idea della filosofia*, Florence 1961, especially pp. 252–253.

[406] E. Berti (*L'Unità*, p. 138) correctly refutes Lugarini, for whom metaphysics would include other disciplines as proper parts. In truth, Aristotle states that physics is a "second philosophy" (*Metaphysics*, 1004 a 4–5), together with mathematics, and that the two make up a "single" knowledge. This is not the case with the other disciplines.

[407] Cfr. Margherita Isnardi, "Alcuni aspetti della concezione della 'technica' nella *Metafisica* di Aristotele", in *Rivista critica della storia della filosofia* XVII, pp. 26–40. The volitive-affective plane was not developed much by Aristotle, which explains ethics' secondary importance, even though it is the first practised discipline and the ruler over the arts.

[408] Cfr. C. Natali, op. cit., p. 32. The name "Metaphysics" is not found in

Aristotle's texts; hence the debate on its origin. Until a short time ago, the so-called library explanation prevailed. Andronicus of Rhodes, organising the scrolls he possessed, found a part of them without a title, in an area between physics and ethics. Therefore, he called these scrolls "after physics", or "metà tà physiká". This opinion was rejected by Hans Reiner ("Die Entstehung und urprüngliche Bedeutung des Namens Metaphysik", in *Zeit f. phil. Forschung* VIII (1954), pp. 210–237). Reiner believed that the name "Metaphysics" was born in the early Peripatetic School, invented by Eudemus but based on Aristotle, who taught the existence of immutable and eternal beings "beyond the 'physis' ". It is prevalently metaphysics which deals with these beings (p. 235). Andronicus merely gave preference to this term. Düring has yet a third opinion, that the term was certainly coined by Aristotle, even though we do not find it in the texts (*op. cit.*, pp. 213 ff.). The present organisation of the 14 books of the *Metaphysics* is as follows: a) Introduction, Books I and II; b) aporematics, Books III, IV and VI; c) systematics, Books VII–X; d) reconsideration of aporematics, Book IX; e) systematics of the immobile, Books XII–XIV. Book V is a separate part, because it serves as a terminological illustration for the subsequent systematic part.

[409] Only once does Aristotle use the expression "epistéme theologiké", and the words "theology", "theologians" and "theologise" mean "mythology", "mythologists", "mythologise" (cfr. Düring, *op. cit.*, pp. 137–138).

[410] This thesis also seems to be proposed by G. Reale (*Storia*. . ., Volume II, p. 272).

[411] L. Elders, "Aristote et l' objet de la Metaphysique", in *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 60 (1962), pp. 165–183. E. Severino proposes a different interpretation, when he states that being indicates the totality of things, as did water of Thales ("La metafisica classica e Aristotele", in *Rivista di filosofia neoscolastica* Suppl. XLVIII (1956)), but this thesis would liken Aristotle to the Ionians, a regression we do not support. A theory similar to that of Elders is held by U. Dhont ("Science suprème et ontologie chez Aristote", in *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 59 (pp. 5–30), for whom "being" has the primary meaning of "ousia", or substance. For A. Mansion, cfr. "Philosophie prémiere, philosophie seconde et métaphysique chez Aristote", In *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 56 (1958), pp. 209–221. This thesis is based on a passage from Aristotle, when he states that metaphysics "is not at all a universal science, because its object is determined and circumscribed in a precise way" (1004 a 5–6). Still, later Aristotle adds, "But since its object is the *concept* of existence, and existence is a constituent of every being, this science is both *prime* and *in a certain way universal*".

[412] P. Merlan, "Aristotle's Unmoved Movers', in *Traditio* IV (1946), pp. 2 ff.

[413] "What use is it to discuss this clear contradiction?" (I. Düring, *op. cit.*, p. 674).

414 Carlo Giacon, "Il platonismo di Aristotele e S. Tommaso", in *Doctor Communis* XXVII (1975), pp. 153–170. We are surprised by the banal superficiality with which Bertrand Russell confronts the theme of substance (in *Western Philosophy*, Volume I, pp. 232–235).

415 E. Gilson, *L'être et l'essence*, Paris 1942, p. 72.

416 J. Owens, *The Doctrine of Being in the Aristotelian Metaphysics*, Toronto 1951, *passim*.

417 M. Heidegger, *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Tubingen 1953, *passim.*, especially p. 146. The author explains that being thus becomes the mode of self-manifestation to the subject, and hence a "lógos". Being is manifested as "lógos" above all in work ("érgon"), or in fact. Aristotelian "energeia" (originally proposed as existence) is distorted as fact.

418 D. Ross, *Prior and Posterior Analytics, Introduction*, p. 80. Therefore, it could be affirmed that for Aristotle (as opposed to Plato) a being is good because it is, and it is not because it is good. Ontological primacy does not belong to good, but to being. The "actus essendi" is affirmed for the first time by the Pseudo-Diogenes (*De coelesti hierarchia*, 177 c 6–8) as participated perfection, a synthesis of Plato's and Aristotle's thought (M. Schiavone, *Il neoplatonismo e il critianesimo nello Pseudo Dionigi*, Milan 1963, p. 205).

419 Mario Mignucci, *La teoria aristotelica della scienza*, Florence 1965, p. 33, note 14. Therefore, a "doxa" of the necessary exists, even if it is not yet seen as such (*Posterior Analytics*, 33 89 a 11–13). Therefore, even being can first be immerged in conscience as "doxa" (*Ibid.*, p. 36).

420 The author correctly observes that the four dimensions are not hierarchical, but dialectically co-present.

421 The division has an inductive or declarative character. Perhaps it would be exaggerated to say that this is an application of the "dialectic" method (Berti, Régis). It is better to state that Aristotle, using intuition, responds to a Platonic requirement (cfr. J. Moreau, "L'être et l'essence", in *Autour d'Aristote*, Paris 1962, p. 75).

422 It has been observed that the accidents are neutral adjectives in Greek. Only once does Aristotle use the abstract ("poiótes"), quality. Therefore, the accidents refer directly to the substance and have an ontological value (cfr. Yvan Pellettier, *Les attributions, Catégories. Le texte aristotelicienne et les prolégomènes d'Ammonios d'Hermeias*, Paris 1983; C. Fabro, "Dall'ente in Aristotele all' 'esse' di S. Tommaso", in *Aquinas* (1958), pp. 20 ff.; J. Owens, *op. cit.*, pp. 3–23; G. Reale, "Filo conduttore ontologico della deduzione delle categorie aristoteliche", in *Rivista di filosofia neoscolastica* (1957), pp. 443 ff.; A. De Rijk, *The Place of Categories of Being in Aristotle's Philosophy*, Assen 1952. Being "per se" or "per accidens" (*Metaphysics*, 1017 a 1) indicates a precarious relation of existence (cfr. also 1026 a

32 ff.), and hence that which is fortuitously casual, of which we do not possess a science. "True and false being is tied to the judgement of the subject, but its foundation is objective reality" (*Categories*, 4 b 8–10, 14 b 18–22). Fundamentally, ontological reality is the constituent of truth. The subject does not possess the truth without the object (*Metaphysics*, 1051 b 6–9). Therefore, "true being" depends on actual existence (*Ibid.*, 1027 b 3).

[423] Cfr. H. Wagner, "Über das aristotelische 'pollachôs légetai tò òn'", in *Kant-Studien* 53 (1961–1962), pp. 75–91. The author opposes this view. It may be added that if Aristotle had been preoccupied with logical predication, then he would have once and for all fixed the number of categories. However, his goal was to place logic at the service of metaphysics.

[424] Suzanne Mansion, *Le judgement d'existence chez Aristotle*, Louvain, 1947, p. 247. The author insists on the primacy of existence over essence as a condition to explain the categories.

[425] J. Owens, *op. cit.*, p. 172. Therefore, I would not say (as Gilson did) that Aristotle professed a form of essentialism. The essentialism exists, but it is derived.

[426] Aristotle divides this into homonyms, synonyms and paronyms (*Metaphysics*, 1013 b 4–7). Homonyms are analogous (not by chance, but by relation) when they come together into a single superior concept ("koinón", "syntómon"), but they distinguish themselves in referring "ad unum" hierarchically, as the word "healthy" does.

[427] It should be observed that Aristotle introduces movement in the ten categories. The act and the potency "are the modal principles of a categorial ontology, with the 'ousia' at the centre" (Oehler, *op. cit.*, p. 176). Or, turning the framework around, the categories are modal principles with their act at the centre.

[428] G. Reale, *Il concetto di filosofia prima*, p. 151. For Caird, the concept of "theion" would be unacceptable, because the "divine" in things is contradictory. "Aristotle seeks to bind this world to God without binding God to the world" (*op. cit.*, Volume II, p. 20). However, Caird works from a Christian position, which is completely extraneous to the Greeks.

[429] Aristotelian theology is spread between various works, among them the *De Coelo*, *Physics* and *Metaphysics*. According to C. Natali, these books are not in agreement, but one sometimes even finds contradictions (*op. cit.*, p. 158).

[430] The author proposes these arguments: a) Aristotle quotes Euripides 29 times directly and 7 times indirectly. We are familiar with the poet's anti-religious bias, even if mockery did not please Aristotle; b) there is little interest for the religious event; c) his caution in treating theological themes, as we see in Philo, who quotes him as follows: "Just as we gather by entering the temple, so one must do when speaking of God." The author concludes that Aristotle does not

have a true theology (*op. cit.*, p. 87). Düring agrees with this opinion (*op. cit.*, passim.).

[431] Therefore, Pepin states that the final part of *Metaphysics* XII, Chapter 8 is connected with *De Philosophia*, p. 151.

[432] C. Natali, *op. cit.*, p. 170; cfr. R. Budeüs, "En marge de la théologie", in *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 77 (1975), pp. 5–33.

[433] P. Merlan, "Ad Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Lambda 8", in *Studies on Epicurus and Aristotle*, Wiesbaden 1960, pp. 73–97. The author mentions that Callippus, a disciple of Eudoxus mentioned by Aristotle (1073 b 34), left Athens before 335 B.C. This leads to the impression that Book Lambda is a work unto itself, but the doctrine proposed there is inspired by the *Magna Moralia* (1212 b 33 – 1213 a 7), on Platonic concepts expressed while Plato was still alive. Therefore, the idea of a God who contemplates himself, although expressed after 335, is to be attributed to Aristotle's original intuitions.

[434] On the presence of the 55 celestial Movers subordinated to the Prime one, Aristotle refers to astronomy, but without excessive preoccupations (cfr. Natali, *op. cit.*, pp. 93–96). This has led to perplexity and accusations, both in antiquity (Plotinus, *Enneads* V, 1, 2) and today (Hamelin, Jäger, etc.).

[435] Therefore, Renè Mugnier's thesis is not acceptable (*La théorie du premier moteur et l'evolution de la pensée aristotelicienne*, Paris 1930), who states that the divine "noûs" is not individual, but immanently diffused entity in the intelligences, as Averroes taught later (*Ibid.*, pp. 193–199).

[436] God, being loved love but not loving love, does not take care of anything. Therefore, when we read that "the gods care ("epiméleia") for the world" (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1179 a 24), it is not intended that these gods are God, as Pepin notes (*op. cit.*, p. 473). Therefore, when Diogenes Laërtius attributes the idea of Providence ("prónoia") to Aristotle, then he is either inventing, or referring to the lost Aristotle, who admitted the care of the celestial world, but not of the sublunar world. For Aristotle, God does not have to do anything outside of himself to be perfect (*Politics* VII, 3, 6). Cfr. G. Lazzati, *S. Aristotele perduto nei Padri della Chiesa*, Milan 1939, p. 139.

[437] Some authors, such as W. Wieland ("Das Problem der Prinzipienforschung und die aristotelische Physik", in *Kant-Studien* 52 (1960–1961), pp. 206–219) support the primacy of dialectics over physics. D. Ross and A. Mansion assert the primacy of metaphysics over dialectics. P. Aubenque unifies the two methods. Perhaps it should be noted that dialectics are not a definitive form of knowledge, but a way, an introduction to the sciences, including metaphysics. The original form of metaphysics is intuitive, including the principle of non-contradiction. E. Berti's theory does not seem acceptable, where dialectics is not introductory, but a constituent of the metaphysical sphere (*op. cit.*, p. 158).

[438] On the contrary, E. Severino, *Il principio di non-contraddizione, Libro V metafisica*, Brescia 1959.

[439] Cfr. G. Cenacchi, "Il principio di non-contradizione fondamento del discorso filosofico", *Aquinas* XVI (1973), pp. 235–257; Maria Casula, "La prova aristotelica del principio di contraddizione del linguaggio", in *Giornale di Metafisica* XXV (1970), pp. 641–673. This latter author, based on the studies of H. Maier, states that the principle does not have eristic logical value, but an ontological value, even if its historical origins are the anti-Megarian polemics. This origin is seen in language; it is necessary to lead the adversary on and force him to say something. The question of the thinkability or unthinkability of being is outside Aristotle's primary intentions.

[440] D. Ross, *Aristotle's Physics*, Oxford 1936⁷, p. 26. In his work on meteorology, Aristotle studies natural phenomena in a different spirit. He mentions and describes the appearance of a comet in February of 372. He discusses lightning, thunder, the aurora borealis, tidal waves, evaporation, dew, cyclones and hail. He deduces rain with the method of prediction, based on clouds and air currents. He knows of the Dead Sea and its saltiness, declares that the volume of the earth is nothing with respect to that of the universe, etc. (cfr. Düring, *op. cit.*, pp. 422–451).

[441] Cfr. Jacques Marcel Dubois, *Le temps et l'instant selon Aristote*, Bruges 1967. The author also considered this problem in earlier essays. A crucial point of the problem regards the concept of "instant" (which J. Moreau had understood in a subjectivistic sense, as "measurement" and not as "measured"). However, in what sense is the instant measured? The author correctly observes that the instant is merely the "limit" or terminus of the "before" with respect to the "after". The soul perceives the "limit" (hence time's subjective aspect) in the "before" and the "after" (hence its objective aspect). This is true, just as a point is the limit of a line; the point is fixed by man, but it is part of the line.

[442] Rudolfo Mondolfo, *L'infinito nel pensiero dell'antichità classica*, Florence 1956. Leo Sweeny, in "L'infini quantitatif chez Aristote", in *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 58 (1960), pp. 505–529, rejects Mondolfo's theory, affirming that Aristotle's infinite is spatio-temporal one of succession. However, for Aristotle the infinite is imperfection. Only the form implies perfection, and hence finiteness. The more perfect a being is, the more finite it is. Therefore, when Aristotle states that the Unmoved Mover has an "infinite potency", he does not say that it is infinite, but that its effect in time is indefinitely infinite.

[443] Gordon H. Clark, "Spontaneity and Monstruosity in Aristotle", in *The New Scholasticism* VII (1943), pp. 31–45. Therefore, Aristotle and Plato found themselves at the middle point between Democritus' absolute casuality and the Stoics' absolute fatality. On the eternity of the world, cfr. J. Baudry, *Le problème de l'origine et de l'éternité du monde*, Paris 1931. The author correctly observes that the

55 movers must be considered inferior gods through a "toujours inferieure" imitation.

[444] There are many studies on this subject. I note those of F. Nuyens, *L'evolution de la psychologie d'Aristote*, Louvain 1948), S. Soleri (*L'immortalità dell'anima*, Turin 1952), E. Barbotin (*La théorie aristotelicienne de l'intellect d'après Théophraste*, Louvain-Paris 1954), G. Movia (*Aristotele, L'anima, Traduzione, introduzione e commento*, Naples 1979). It is always useful to examine the views of Düring (op. cit., pp. 623–658), A. Mansion ("L'immortalité de l'âme et de l'intellect d'après Aristote", in *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 51 (1953), pp. 444–472). This latter work is a rather severe summary of Soleri's. According to the author, the "tò poietikón" would not be a particular function of the intellect, but a human function. Hence we have the refutation of monopsychism. Moreover, he states that immortality belongs "to the pure essence of the intellect in the state of separation" (p. 470).

[445] Therefore, the light is not the object, but only a vehicle of colours. The colour is a modification of the "diaphanum", or transparent means, and not a flow of particles, as Empedocles and the Atomists taught. Aristotle explained that sensitive perception has no extension. Therefore, the eye, in perceiving green, does not become green, but – almost like the intelligence - takes on an immaterial activity, even if the contact with the object is necessary.

[446] Properly speaking, Aristotle does not possess an adequate vocabulary. The words "proaíresis", "boúlesis" and "hórexis" mean "choice", "volition" and "appetite", respectively. The acts are indicated, not the mover capacities. Nevertheless, he sees the difference between what is elicited and what is commanded.

[447] The "grammateîon" was a wax slate or tablet which Athenian youths used to learn how to read and write.

[448] Aristotle, in *De generatione animalium* II, 3, 736 b 28 (later reconsidered by Theophrastus, fragment 53 W), asserts that the soul "enters [the body] as if through a door". There are two interpretations of this: one biological, referring to generation, and another proposing a divine origin, almost like that of creation (cfr. Paul Moreau, "A propos du 'thyrathen' chez Aristote", in *Autour d'Aristote*, pp. 257–295).

[449] Pierre Aubenque (*La prudence chez Aristote*, Paris 1963) recommends not attributing great weight to the *Protrepticus* as the matrix of Aristotelic ethics, both for its speculative character and for the difficulties inherent in the preserved texts. Disagreeing with Aubenque is E. La Croce, in "Etica y Metafisica en el Protréptico de Aristoteles", in *Ethos*, Buenos Aires 1982–1983, pp. 169–182.

[450] This expression was understood in an immanentistic way by Düring, insofar as the "God" discussed in Aristotle's famous expression would be human

reason, which represents the "divine" in us (cfr. *op. cit.*, p. 512). Perhaps Natali is more precise (*op. cit.*, p. 85). Man must reach God according to what is proper to man, which are human capacities.

[451] This allows us to say that Aristotelian ethics do not arise from an aesthetic conception of moral life (as Zuccante stated not long ago), nor are these ethics intuitionistic (as D. Ross states), but they arise from continuous labour of teleological induction and deduction through a concordance with the objective order. However, according to Zuccante, the *Nicomachean Ethics* signal the abandonment of the *Eudemian Ethics*' religious ethics ("ethics of the salvation of the soul"). The fear of the 'hybris" ceases, and is replaced by the obligation for terrestrial happiness (*op. cit.*, p. 366). John Doudley (*Gott und 'theoria' bei Aristoteles, Die Metaphysische Grundlage der Nicomachischen Ethik*, Frankfurt-Bern 1983) states that Aristotle's ethical ideal repeats Plato's "homoiosís tôi theoî" (pp. 25–27).

[452] M. Pohlenz, *L'uomo greco*, translated into Italian, p. 444. The "phronesis", or prudence, has as its object the contingent in its three dimensions: chaos, fortune and circumstances ("kairós"). Düring does not admit that prudence is subjected to universal norms, insofar as the "orthòs lógos", in his opinion, does not indicate a universal law, but a practical judgement (op. cit., p. 528). However, the author does not seem to take into consideration the dianoetic virtues, which relate the "phronesis". Obviously, "prudence has the goal of regulating the concrete: 'ta kath hékasta gnórizein'" (*Nicomachean Ethics* VI, 1141 b).

[453] Cfr. Adriano Bausola, "La teleologia aristotelica e il valore della attività noetica", in *Aristotele nella critica e negli studi contemporanei*, Supplement to *Rivista di filosofia neoscolastica* XIVIII, Milan 1956, pp. 26–70. Aristotle considers "pleasure" in the footsteps of his first professor, Eudoxus. But pleasure is not an evil, nor is it the greatest good, but an aspect of the virtuous man's perfection (cfr. P. Merlan, *art. cit.*, pp. 32 ff.).

[454] At this point, Aristotle introduces the distinction discovered only recently between economic goods' value of use and value of exchange (I, 3).

[455] Cfr. M. Defourny, *Aristote, Etudes sur la Politique*, Louvain 1932, pp. 76.; Bruno Brunello, "Politica e diritto nel pensiero", in *Grande antologia filosofica*, Milan, Volume II, p. 622; L. Bagolini, "Il problema della schiavitù nel pensiero etico-politico di Aristotele", in *Scienza e Filosofia*, Milan 1942, pp. 1–38. According to Flückiger (*Geschichte der europäischen Rechtsidee im Altertum und im Frühmittelalter*, Zollikon-Zurich 1954), the Platonic-Aristotelic state is merely a laicised version of the heroic-Pindaric concept of a state whose founders are the gods (pp. 186 ff.). It seems to me that this is unacceptable, especially in Aristotle. For Aristotle, the State is not "ideal", as Düring has repeated, but "auspicable".

[456] On natural law in Aristotle, cfr. Joachim Ritter, *Naturrecht bei Aristoteles*, Stuttgart 1961. There is no "lex naturae", but a "iustum naturae" (pp. 15–16).

Eric Vogelin ("Da Recht von Natur", in *Das Naturrecht in der politischen Theorie*, Vienna 1963, pp. 38–51: the author states that in the three concepts of justice, law and declaration of law ("dike") we see Aristotle's philosophy of law. Natural law as human order is the foundation of the State.

[457] In his judgement, the Nordic peoples are robust, but coarse; the Asiatics intelligent, but without will power. The Greeks would possess the good qualities of both, but not the defects. Therefore, if they were united, they could rule the world (VII, 6).

[458] Cfr. Maria Cristina Donnini Macciò, *Educazione e filosofia in Aristotele*, Turin 1979, especially p. 9. Although it remains true that the "good man" is a "good citizen", yet education forms the person, and hence the State cannot ask an individual to sacrifice his talents.

[459] The first study done on Aristotelian logic was done by H. Maier (3 volumes, Tubingen 1896–1900). However, as K. Oehler observes (op. cit., p. 13), this is an arid work in which the psychological aspect of the logical process is not taken into account. In 1931, E. Kapp added a new (or more precise) orientation. This logic does not arise from a reflection on the forms of thought, but from the debating techniques used in the Academy (*Greek Foundation of Traditional Logic*, New York 1942). For example, the syllogism is not a noetic paradigm of the thinking subject, but a method or technique of mental gymnastics. The scheme of premises-conclusion is not cognitive, at least in its primary sense. The instrumental character of logic appears only in the *Topics*. Nevertheless, it cannot be said that logic has only a preparatory function. It is a science in itself, a philosophical wisdom. This is not changed by the fact that Aristotle does not mention logic when he lists the sciences. Jan Lukasiewicz (*Aristotle's Syllogistic from the Standpoint of Modern Formal Logic*, Oxford 1951) attempted to demonstrate (as did Scholz, Becker and Bochenski) that Aristotelian logic detaches itself from its Megarian-Stoic counterpart. Being formal, it should be considered a precedent for contemporary symbolic logic. However, this hypothesis has been criticised by C. Viano (*La logica di Aristotele*, Turin 1955) and G. Colli (*L'organo aristotelico*, Turin 1955). Lukasiewicz's mistake was that he expunged every trace of psychology from Aristotelian logic (cfr. *De Interpretatione*, 16 a 3–18, *Prior Analytics* 9, 76 a 26–30). Düring (*op. cit.*, pp. 66–139) confirms the debating origin and preparatory character of logic. Moreover, he attempts to establish the dates of the six works (from 357 to 350?). However, he concludes that, although it is true that all are older and were written after Plato's *Sophistes*, we know no more about their dates than this.

[460] For Aristotle, "gnoseology" is not distinguished from metaphysics. The true being (which is one of the four articulations of being), in its external aspect as a totality of propositions, is the object of logic. However, the aspect of conformity between the thought and the thing in inherent to man's noetic structure. Science

depends on things: "science is the known thing" (*Metaphysics* XII, 1075 a 1). Instead, the logical question arises when one attempts to understand how the word is "symbol of the thing".

[461] Düring, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

[462] *Ibid.*, p. 137.

[463] Gnoseology considers the problem of *concepts*. The concepts emerge from contact with the real concrete ("kath' hékaston"). Aristotle's more difficult problem is: are they universal, and hence empty, useless abstractions of the concrete, or are they particular, in which case science is not possible (*Metaphysics* III, 1003 a 6–17)? The response is that the agent intellect gathers the universal in the concrete in such a way that it is valid in the concrete (cfr. A. Manno, *La metafisica di Aristotele, Suo valore e suoi limiti*, Naples 1957). Rhetorical and sophistical dialectics' object is the "possible" ("dynatón"), while gnoseology and metaphysics study the "ousia", which is the universal based in the real.

[464] Cfr. Suzanne Mansion, *Le jugement d'existence chez Aristote, passim.*

[465] According to Düring (pp. 140 ff.), the *Rhetorics* was written around 357. This can be seen both from the names of contemporary personages (Demosthenes is never mentioned, because his fame began in 354). Moreover, it echoes the style of the *Poetics*, which has a more remote date. It is not improbable that after 335 modifications and adaptations were inserted. Above all, the *Rhetoric* for Aristotle is a "techne". For this reason, it is treated along with his *Poetics*, as works belonging to the "poiesis" (see above, n. 136).

[466] Antonio Russo, *La filosofia della retorica in Aristotele*, Naples 1962.

[467] M. Pohlenz, *L'uomo greco*, p. 780. The author states, "The [Greek] theatre was a moral institution in the most profound sense of the word, with the exclusion of every pedantry . . . The poet did not intend to speak to an occasional public, but to his people, in the guise of a religious and moral educator" (*Ibid.*). According to H. Flashar, the *Poetics* would belong to "practical" philosophy (*op. cit.*, p. 368). Perhaps we should make a distinction: the material object is not a "práttein", but the "poieîn". It is "practical" for the philosopher who thinks it.

[468] Aristotelian "mimesis" was understood in at least three ways: a) as an ideal re-creation of the object through imitation (Valgimigli); b) as a reproduction (Rostagni); c) in a moderated fashion proposed by Albeggiani. The "mimesis" is the realisation of an imitated object by perceiving its most universal aspects. In doing this, the artist must know the object, investigating it and adapting himself to what is most beautiful in it. The poet is "ekstatikós"; he leaves himself to receive and then re-create by idealising the object (cfr. U. Galli, "La mimesi autentica secondo Aristotele", in *Studi di filologia classica* IV (1926), f. 42; F. Albeggiani, *Aristotele, La Poetica*, Florence 1937; G. Vattimo, *Il concetto di fare in Aristotele*, Turin 1961; C. Del Grande, *op. cit.*, pp. 369–374).

[469] Cfr. Edwards G. Ballard, "The Subject of Aristotle's Poetics", in *The Personalist* XXXII (1951), pp. 391 ff. The author proposes his own interpretation. Art is based in two poles: mimetic, tragic pathos (form) or a hero's folly (matter), and the hero's illuminating catharsis (form). The final phase is the catastrophe, in which matter and form coincide.

[470] M. Timpanaro Cardini, '"Physis' e 'techne' in Aristotele", in *Studi di filosofia greca*, Bari 1950, pp. 279–305.

[471] F. Else, quoted by I. Düring, *op. cit.*, pp. 202 ff.; Düring shared Else's interpretation.

[472] Cfr. F. W. Walbank, *The Hellenistic World*, translated into Italian, Bologna 1983, especially pp. 187–220 regarding cultural, scientific, technological and philosophical development.

[473] Bertrand Russell writes: "Disgracefully, it was the Babylonians or Chaldeans who had more of an effect of the Greeks' imagination. The influence was above all on their fabulous antiquity. Then there was a more genuine wisdom: the Babylonians could more or less predict the eclipses much sooner than the Greeks could. But what was absorbed the most was astrology and magical art. Astrology, as Professor Gilbert Murray says, weighed on the Hellenic mind like a new epidemic. The tomb of Otimandias, as described by Diodorus, was covered by astrological symbols, and that of Antioch I, which was discovered at Commagenes, is of the same type. It was natural to believe that the stars were watching over them." (*op. cit.*, p. 323). A certain magician Berosus founded a school of astrology in Cos around 300 B.C., and later its influence was felt all the way to Rome.

[474] For these authors, cfr. the very detailed philological and bibliographical study of Joachim Krämer, Die Alter Akademie, pp. 121–174.

[475] The denomination of the five Academies seems to belong to Sextus Empiricus (second century A.D.). The subject is complex, for political reasons. For example, Philo of Laryssa, a disciple of Clitomachus, had to leave Athens during the Mithridatic war and take refuge in Rome. Among others, Cicero was his disciple. According to Diogenes Laërtius, the successors at the Academy were (in chronological order): Speusippus, Xenocrates, Polemon, Crates, Crantor, Arcesilaus, Bion, Lacides, Carneades and Clitomachus. From this it seems plausible that, for Diogenes Laërtius, Sillas' destruction brought an end to the school. In fact, Clitomachus, the last leader, was Philo's teacher, and Philo then moved to Rome. It should also be noted that Clitomachus was originally from Carthage, and his Punic name was Hasdrubal.

[476] For a more detailed examination of the Peripatetic School, cfr. Franz Wehrli and his great essay, *Der Peripatos bis zum Begin der Römischen Kaiserzeit*, pp. 461–597.

[477] On *Historia plantarrum*, cfr. J. J. Kenny, "The Early Tradition of Theophrastus' *Historia plantarrum*", in Hermes (1968), pp. 293–298. He discusses the chronology and the internal order of the 9 books making up Theophrastus' work.

[478] Theophrastus, *Metaphysics* III, 2.

[479] Cfr. Giovanni Reale, *Storia della filosofia antica*, Volume III, pp. 141 ff. For Theophrastus' theory of the intellect cfr. Edmund Barbotin, *La théorie aristotelicienne de l'intellect d'après Theophraste*, Louvain-Paris 1954. We have only 13 fragments on this doctrinal point, as they are reported by Themistius, Priscianus and Simplicius. Barbotin wishes to demonstrate the identity of Theophrastus' and Aristotle's views. For example, the "to poietikón" of the teacher would be equal to the "kinoûn" of the disciple. However, Barbotin's essay has been criticised by Gerard Verbeke ("La théorie aristotelicienne d'après Theophraste", in *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 53 (1955), pp. 368–382, Verbeke observes that the disciple's faithfulness is neither total nor certain.

[480] Cfr. Jean Beaujeu, "La science hellenistique et romaine", in *La science antique et médiéval*, I Tome, *Histoire generale des sciences*, Paris 1957, pp. 301 ff.

[481] This work was known in the Middle Ages in Gerard of Cremona's Arab-Latin version. However, Paul Moraux (*Alexander d'Afrodise*, exégète *de la noétique d'Aristote*, Paris 1942) negates its authenticity. C. Bazan, however, has rejected Moraux's conclusions, in 'L'authenticité du De Intellectu, attribué à Alexandre d'Afrodise", in *Revue de philosophie de Louvain* 71 (1973), pp. 468–487.

[482] Diogenes Laërtius states, ". . . Epicurus, together with his mother, went to the houses of poor people and recited expiatory formulas, and together with his father taught in a school for a paltry salary". (X, 4).

[483] Timocrates, a nauseated student, abandoned him and became a Platonist, discrediting him with accusations and dishonourable words. Among them were vomit procured for meals, scandalous sensuality, and grave illnesses (in later years, he was carried about on a three-wheeled carriage) (Diogenes Laërtius X, 6–7, 5). For the intrigues of the courtesan Leontine (or Leontius) and Leonteus, tied to Demetrius Poliorcetes (who allowed the opening of the 'garden'), cfr. E. Bignone, *op. cit.*, Volume II, pp. 150–153.

[484] For this question, cfr. G. Arrighetti, *Epicuro*, *Opere*, Turin 1960. For the texts, see Lidia Massa Positano, *Epicurea*, Padua 1969.

[485] Ettore Bignone, *Aristotele perduto*, Volume II, pp. 273 ff.; it seems that Epicurus did not understand Aristotle correctly.

[486] Romano Amerio, "L'epicureismo e la morte", in *Filosofia* 3 (1950), pp. 541 ff. It should be noted that the letter to Menoeceus is programmatic and is close to Aristotle's *Protrepticus*. Nor can we forget that the use of letters in ancien time was analogous to today's congresses!

[487] C. Capone Braga, "La religione in Epicuro", in *Studi di Epicuro*, Milan 1951, p. 92. The author reviews the differences between Democritus' subjectivism and Epicurean realism. In passing, it should be noted that K. Marx preferred Epicurus to Democritus, for the instrumental character of the former's physics (cfr. A. Cornu, *La jeunesse de Karl Marx*, Paris 1934).

[488] Cfr. V. F. Alfieri, "Il divino in Democrito e Epicuro", in *Studi sulla filosofia greca*, Bari 1950, pp. 115–120; R. Amerio, "L'epicureismo e gli dei", in *Filosofia* 4 (1953), pp. 125–148; G. Arrighetti, "Sul problema dei tipi divini nell'epicureismo", in *La parola del passato* X (1955), pp. 404–415.

[489] C. Pascal, "La venerazione degli dei in Epicuro", in *Rivista di filosofia* 34 (1906), pp. 241–256; A. J. Festugiere, *Epicure et ses dieux*, Paris 1945. Some decades ago, Epicurean theology was debated. Are the gods many in number, or many in species? It seems that Epicurus admitted many species of gods; but then, how are they distinguished? P. Merlan allowed for only two species (the author also refers to archaeology: the three Graces were sculpted as if they were two twins). C. Diano (*Epicuri Ethica*, 1946) and M. Gigante ("Filodemo, De morte IV, 3", in *Società nazionale di scienze lettere ed arti*, *Naples*, *Rendiconti dell'Accademia di Archeologia*, *Lettere e Belle Arti* 28 (1953–1954), pp. 119–132) admitted two classes: one class of individualised and visible gods which can be distinguished from each other, and another class of gods who are specifically distinct. However, in each species there is a multitude of divinities which cannot be distinguished from each other. This is seconded by C. Vicol, "Considerazioni sulla dottrina teologica di Epicuro", in *Giornale di filosofia* II (1949)) and P. Frassinetti, "Cicerone e gli dei di Epicuro, in *Rivista di filosofia* (1954), pp. 113–132). However, all agree in the fact that Epicurean theology, although it is sincere, is unsteady and contradictory.

[490] Eight proofs: a) the diffusibility of the soul; b) psycho-somatic parallelism (the soul is an epi-phenomenon of the body); c) gradual nature of dying (the soul does not detach itself suddenly from the body of a dying man or cadaver; d) anguish of the dying (the argument is contrary to Epicurean "happiness" at all costs; e) the natural site (the only site is the body; outside of it, it ceases to exist); f) divisible nature of souls (anellides and turtles continue to live when cut in two. Therefore, the soul is divisible); g) impossibility of inorganic life (outside the body, the soul remains inert); h) heterogenesis of the body and the soul (cfr. Romano Amerio, *L'epicureismo e la morte*, pp. 553–557).

[491] E. Bignone, *op. cit.*, Volume II, p. 106. However, as the author observes, we are not certain whether Epicurus even read them. They were read by his disciple Colothes after the death of the teacher, in order to refute Aristotle. Therefore, Plutarch accuses Colothes of ignorance for having known what Epicurus did not know. Cicero extends the accusation to all the Epicureans.

[492] Therefore, Seneca (Usener, fragment 242) states that, in their origin, logic

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and physics were the same thing for Epicurus.

[493] Philip Merlan, *Studies in Epicurus and Aristotle*, p. 7; C. Diano, "Note epicuree" in *Studi italiani di filologia classica* 12 (1935), pp. 61–86, 237–289; Ibid., "Questioni epicuree", *Accademia dei Licei, Roma, Scienze morali, Rendiconti*, 6 series, 12 volumes, 1936, pp. 819–895; Ibid., "La psicologia di Epicuro e la teoria delle passioni", in *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana* 20 (1939), pp. 105–141; 21 (1940), pp. 151–165; 22 (1941), pp. 5–34; 23 (1942), pp. 5–49, 121–150.

[494] E. Bignone, *op. cit.*, Volume II, pp. 99–100, 216–217. Epicurus did not want to propose Speusippus' ideal of solitude ("heremía"), not Stilpo's impassibility ("apátheia"), but a sociableness of affection and friendship, which is his highest theme. "For love of friendship one should confront the risks, the danger of love" (quoted by Bignone, p. 300).

[495] Bertrand Russell, *op. cit.*, pp. 340 ff. However, Diogenes Laërtius is not stingy with his praise for Epicurus (X, 9–12).

[496] Cfr. E. Bignone, *Lucrezio come interprete della filosofia di Epicuro*, Florence 1939; G. Capone Braga, "Aspetto pessimistico della dottrina di Epicuro", in *Studi su Epicuro*; pp. 47–87, who wrote against Guissard's optimistic interpretation.

[497] According to G. Reale, *op. cit.*, Volume IV, p. 70, in 267 A.D. a barbaric invasion of Erules probably also destroyed Epicurus' "garden", bringing an end to its stable centre. But the "garden", as we see in a letter of Cicero, had already been sold and changed in 51 B.C. Perhaps it was resurrected in another place, as would result from the testimony not only of the above-mentioned Lucian, but also of Galen, Pliny the Old, etc.

[498] See Michel Spanneut's interesting work on the migration of Stoic ideas into the Church Fathers, *Le Stoïcisme des Pères de l'Eglise*, Paris 1957. But, it is known that Stoicism was reconsidered in various, but significant forms, in the seventeenth century with Spinoza, Grotius, Pufendorf and others.

[499] There are two versions of this Crates: Diogenes Laërtius referes to a Crates, disciple of Antisthenes the Cynic after Diogenes of Synope. Clement of Alexandria intends the Crates who was Scholarch at the Academy after Polemon. Hence the diverse versions of original Stoicism: either inclined to Cynicism, or to Platonism (cfr. M. Pohlenz, *op. cit.*, Volume 1, pp. 249–250). However, the Cynical character of Zeno's doctrines gives us an impression of Crates the Cynic.

[500] Cfr. Francesco Della Corte, "Stoicismo in Macedonia e in Roma", in *Studi di filosofia greca*, op. cit., pp. 309–319.

[501] Cfr. Johannes Ab Arnim, *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, Volume III, pp. 208–269.

[502] The decay of the ancient Stoa must be partly attributed to the character given by Chrysippus. He reduced critique to philosophical research and declared war on the passions in his general vision of anthropology. He elaborated

complicated theories to safeguard free choice from fate. He, being eastern by birth, replaced the Greeks' "you can" with the "you must". His quibbling and frigid intellectualism suffocated the school's environment (cfr. M. Pohlenz, *Gestalten aus Hellas*, Munich 1950, pp. 583–588.)

[503] It is historians' conviction that Cleanthes insisted on the astral character of divinity, basing himself on Aristotle's *De philosophia*. This is asserted by Verbeke and, in a more detailed fashion, by J. Pepin (*Théologie cosmique et théologie chrétienne*, Paris 1964, p. 138). Hence the Stoics' use of astrology and divination.

[504] Maier, *op. cit.*, pp. 18–19.

[505] G. Reale, *op. cit.*, Volume III, p. 349. This is perhaps one of the most valid and perrenial reasons for Stoicism in the absolute sense (cfr. E. Elorduy, "Misión de la Stoa en la filosofia perene", in *Revista de Filosofia* VI (1947), Madrid, p. 555).

[506] M. Pohlenz, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

[507] Perhaps it would be appropriate to mention that in the fifth century B.C. in India there flowered a Buddhist philosophical school called "ajnanika" (literally, non-cognitive), which taught that nothing can be said about anything. The philosopher Sanjayin Vairattiputra wrote: "I am absolutely not able to know whether a thing is good or evil. Therefore, if I were to declare that something is good or evil, then my judgement would be disturbed by my preference or aversion, and hence would be inexact ("cfr. H. von Glassenapp, *Filosofia dell'India*, translated into Italian, Turin 1962, pp. 112–113). This news teaches us much about the episode narrated by Plutarch of Calanus, a "gymnophysist" or Indian holy man who, having become ill, wanted to die spontaneously on a pyre in the presence of the Greek soldiers in Babylonia (*Life of Alexander*, 69).

[508] Mario Dal Prà, *Lo scetticismo greco*, second edition, Bari 1975; L. Robin, *Pyrrhon et le scepticisme grec*, Paris 1944; M. Conche, *Pyrrhon ou l'apparence*, Villers sur Mer, 1973.

[509] I do not, however, manage to understand the hostility of B. Russell toward the elder Cato (*Storia della filosofia occidentale*, p. 335) and his incapacity to understand the general genius of the Romans, who appear stupid, coarse and overbearing compared to the Greeks.

[510] Therefore, since the nineteenth century scholars have spoken of "Middle Stoicism" (A. Schemkel, *Die Philosophie der mittleren Stoa*, Berlin 1892); M. Pohlenz prefers the expression "Middle Stoa" (*op. cit.* I, p. 388). We prefer to call this "Roman philosophy", for the new spirit animating it. We avoid the word "eclectic" because of the negative connotation this word has obtained. Cfr. V. D'Agostino, *Studi sul neo-Stoicismo*, Turin 1950, p. 8, who energetically excludes the title of eclectic for Seneca.

[511] Perhaps the choice of Rhodes depends on the fact that the Academy taught in Athens, and Clitomachus did not approve of them.

[512] This strange fervour for studies on Poseidonius at first led to his being considered the inspiration for the first book of the *Tusculanae* and Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, of Plutarch's *De facie lunae*, and even the fifth-century song of the "Aeneis" (K. Reinhardt, "Poseidonius von Apamea der Rhodier gennant", in the *Realencyklopädie der klassischen Altertumswiss*, Volume XXII, 558–826). Later Jaeger made him the precursor of neo-Platonism for having introduced the concept of "intermediary" (*Nemesios von Emesa, Quelleforschungen zum Neuplatonismus und seinen Anfängen bei Poseidonios*, Berlin 1914). He was also presented as the author of a vitalistic philosophy, etc. (cfr. G. Reale, *Storia*. . . , Volume III, pp. 446–447).

[513] Paul Moreaux, *Der Aristotelismus bei den Griechen von Andronikos bis Alexander von Aphrodisias*, I, *Die Renaissance des Aristotelismus in I Jah.*, Berlin 1973.

[514] Cfr. P. L. Donini, *Tre studi sull'aristotelismo del II sec. d.C.*, Turin 1974, We also mention among the Aristotelians Alexander of Ege, Nero's teacher; Adrastus of Aphrodisias, who commented in an erudite manner on the Nicomachean Ethics; and Aristocles of Messene. It could be said that until the first century A.D., the Peripatetic School underwent the influence of the Stoa, and in the second century they were affected by Platonism. See Dario Composta, *Natura e ragione*, Zurich 1971, pp. 333–335. For the Roman culture of the time, cfr. A. J. Festugière-P. Fabre, *Il mondo greco-romano al tempo di Gesù Cristo*, translated into Italian, Turin 1955.

[515] Seneca did not write a treatise entitled *De hominis natura*, where we find problematics on the highest questions concerning man. In Letter 34, he confronts the following questions. Who is man? What is his essence? When does his existence on earth begin? How long is his life? What is the seat of the soul? What will the soul do when separated from the body? Separated from the body, what will it remember? Man is made up of: a corruptible "corpus"; the "soul", a perishable and material, vital breath; the "animus", which is the superior "ego", the seat of the "conscientia", which is the faculty distinguishing men from animals. The animal possesses the "sense of his own constitution", but through his "ratio", man knows that he belongs to God. Hence the sentence "Sequere naturam, sequere rationem, sequere Deum." Therefore, Seneca preaches the equality of all men, including slaves.

[516] Cfr. A. Ortega, "La dimensión religiosa en el pensamiento de Séneca", in *Actas del Congreso Internacional de Filosofía en commemoración de Séneca en el centenario de su muerte* I, Cordoba 1965, p. 47.

[517] Marino Gentile, *I fondamenti metafisici della morale di Seneca*, Milan 1932, p. 85.

[518] Concetto Marchesi, *Seneca*, Milan 1934, p. 405.

[519] Cfr. Cornelio Fabro, Riflessioni sulla libertà, Perugia 1983, pp. 28–31. H. Lietzmann (Geschichte der Alte Kirche, Berlim 1961, p. 168) investigates the

origin of first-century A. D. religious interiority. In his opinion, the interiority derives from the religion of the mysteries, which came to Rome from Asia Minor. He gives an episode: in Philadelphia of Lydia in the first century A.D., a temple was erected to the laws, because it was said that in a vision Jove recommended this work of piety in honour of Dionysus. A moral catechism was edited for purposes of worship. Every month the faithful gathered for the recitation of the "creed" of moral truths, together with the confession of sins. The author concludes that in this framework we find those traits of popular Stoicism which eliminated distinctions between classes and sexes and pushed religion in a direction of man's freedom and human dignity. Lietzmann concludes that these ideas flowered in Epictetus of Hierapolis. We do not agree with this version. Although we admit a slow migration of religious ideas from the East to Rome (where the Persian magi had arrived even before the times of Augustus), it does not seem possible that one episode could provoke such an important change of direction in Roman mentality in such a short time. I believe that it was Nero's madness and villainy that re-awakened the religious sense of those Romans who were more closely bound to their fathers' religious tradition and moral sense. At any rate, how can we explain the condemnation of the neo-Pythagorean Statilius Taurus and the matron Graecina for charges of magic in the times of Nero? These are not representatives of the religion of mysteries!

520 For these doctrines it has been attempted to give credit to a series of correspondence between Seneca and Saint Paul, which is believed to be a spurious work of the third century A.D. Some scholars say that the "kràtistos Theóphilos" of the Gospel of Saint Luke (prologue) is Seneca (Jean Dauvillier, *Histoire du Droit et des institutions de l'Eglise en Occident* II, *Les temps apostoliques, ler siècle*, Paris 1978, believes that this person was the proconsul Sergius Paulus of the Acts). Eleuterio Elorduy ("Senecay el Cristianesimo", in *Actas* I, pp. 161–206), with his archaeological and Biblical arguments, is inclined to consider Seneca as a man who at least knew primitive Christianity. For the texts of the 14 letters, cfr. M. Erbetta, *op. cit.*, Volume III, pp. 85–92.

521 Historians ask themselves whether Saint Paul borrowed some elements of his preaching from Stoicism. Rudolf Bultmann, as we know, expressed favourable opinions, but as an acceptable abuse of the Apostle to make use of the pagan mind. The principal argument is geographic: Tarsus was a centre of the Stoic school from the very beginning. Chrysippus may have been from Tarsus. Zeno, the Scholarch in Athens from 208–205 B.C., was from Tarsus. Antipater was from Tarsus, and in 155 B.C. he traveled to Rome together with Critolaus and Carneades. Archidemus was from Tarsus in the second century B.C., as was Athenodorus, the philosopher who was Marcellus' mentor at Augustus' court. Having reached the designated age limit, at the age of 70 he returned to his homeland, bringing with him doctrine and riches. Paul heard him speak.

However, Max Pohlenz refutes this thesis (*op. cit.* II, p. 443), observing that Paul was educated "at the feet of Gamaliel" in Jerusalem. Moreover, Paul by nature fled from compromise, as opposed to another Jew and contemporary, Philo of Alexandria.

[522] Leonardo Ferrero, *Storia del Pitagorismo nel mondo romano*, dalle origini fino alla repubblica, Turin 1955. It seems, however, that Numa, discussed by Roman tradition, is an invention from 180 B.C. Varro and Saint Augustine will accept it as truth.

[523] Giuseppe Felten, *Storia dei tempi del Nuovo Testamento* II, *Le condizioni socialie morali interne del popolo ebreo ai tempi del Nuovo Testamento*, third reprinting, Turin, pp. 294–296. Aristobulus is mentioned by Clement of Alexandria in the *Stromata* I, 15, 72) and by Eusebius of Caesarea (*Praep. Evang.* VIII, 9).

[524] The list proposed by G. Reale recognises only 36 works, with the comment that many others are considered spurious (V, pp. 392–393). There are some critical editions, such as L. Cohn-W. Wendland, and indices (such as that of Leisegang). There is also the French tradition of Modésert, and in Italy some works have recently been released to the public, In general there have been few Italian studies. The best is G. B. Mondin, *Filone e Clemente*, second edition, Rome 1983, and A. Maddalena, *Filone Alessandrino*, Milan 1970.

[525] According to H. Wolfson (*Philo*, *Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism*, *Christianity and Islam*, two volumes, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1948, second edition), the original themes are: a) God's existence; b) God's unity; c) God's Providence; d) creation of the world; e) the world's unity; f) the existence of incorporeal ideas; g) revelation of the Law; h) eternity of the Law (Volume I, pp. 164–166). From the theological point of view, Philo introduced the miracle as a proof of God's presence in the world, as well as angelology and the revelation of God's unknowability.

[526] Cfr. K. Feibleman, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

[527] R. Mondolfo (*L 'infinito della antichità classica*, Florence 1956) and V. Guazzoni Foà ("Dall' 'apeiron' di Anassimandro all' 'ateleston' di Parmenide", in *Giornale di Metafisica* XV (1960), pp. 465–474) are not in agreement with Philo's discovery. According to Foà, Philo's critique of the pre-Socratics is unjust, and the pre-Socratics expressed both undetermined and determined infinity.

[528] G. B. Mondin, *op. cit.*, p. 41. The proofs of God's existence are analogy and the teleological argument, which are inspired; respectively, by the Stoics and by Plato-Aristotle. However, sometimes he states (against the "Chaldeans") that the best proof must not be sought in the physical world or in divination, but in man's spirit (*De migratione Abrahami* XXXII, 179).

[529] Mondin, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

[530] Jean Pepin observes that the ambiguity is not caused by the Biblical text, but by Philo's (and the Greeks') thought in general (*Théologie cosmologique et théologie chrétienne*, Paris 1964, pp. 366–388). The ambiguity is found in the *Corpus Hermeticum*, in Julianus Augustus, and in the pagan listeners of Saint Augustine.

[531] G. B. Mondin, *op. cit.*, p. 69. According to Wolfson, Philo's "lógos" has five meanings: "ideal pleroma, God's creature, God's property, 'lógos' immanent to the world, and constituent idea of God (*op. cit.*, Volume I, p. 258).

[532] Notwithstanding this, in some passages Philo states that if God is not knowable in His essence ("ousia"), then He can be known in His existence ("hyparxis hóti éstin") through the order and beauty of the world, which mirrors Him.

[533] Willy Theiler ("Plotin und die antike Philosophie", in *Vorberaitung des Neuplatonismus*, Berlin 1964, third edition, pp. 140–159) states that the history of neo-Platonism includes three stages: a) pre-neo-Platonism, which for him begins with Poseidonius (not everyone agrees with this idea), with Numenius of Apamaea and Platonists like Albinus as the precursors of neo-Platonism; b) the neo-Platonism of teaching, which includes Plotinus, Porphyry and Amelius; c) diffusion of neo-Platonism in the fourth century throughout Syria and Pergamus, among both Christians and pagans. There is no doubt that the Gnostics should be listed between the first and second categories.

[534] For all this information, and for a translation of the texts into Italian, cfr. the erudite volume of my colleague M. Erbetta, *Gli Apocrifi del Nuovo Testamento, Testi giudeocristiani e gnostici* I, 1, Turin 1975. Still debated is the date of publication of the *Codex Brucianus*, which was written on papyri by two copyists. Theories range from the fourth through the tenth centuries.

[535] For the story of this discovery, cfr. Jean Doresse, *The Secret Books of the Egyptian Gnostics, An Introduction to the Gnostic Coptic Manuscripts Discovered at Chenoboskion*, translated into English, London 1960. A bedouin, excavating in the necropolis of Nag-Hammadi, found a sealed jar. He opened it and found 13 volumes, or scrolls. First he tried to sell them to the local Coptic pastor at Chenoboskion and later at a bazaar in Cairo. Some of the material, fortunately, found its way into the hands of Doresse, who gave them to Professor Püch at the Sorbonne. Hence there came the intervention of the Egyptian government, which soon after bought all the scrolls, except for some scrolls sold in Switzerland (*Jung Codex*).

[536] Aa.Vv., "Le origini dello gnosticismo", Conference in Messina, 13–18 April 1966, texts and discussions published and edited by U. Bianchi in *Studies in the History of Religions, Supplement to no. 12*, Leyden 1967. We will quote it as *Coll.*

[537] Raffaello Farina, "Lo gnosticismo dopo Nag-Hammadi, Fonti, origine, dottrina", in *Salesianum* XXXII (1970), pp. 425–454.

[538] Stanislas *Lionnet*, "Saint Paul et le gnosticisme, L 'epître au Colosiens", in *Coll.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 538–555); R.M.L. Wilson, "Gnosis, Gnosticism and the New Testament", *Ibid.*, pp. 511–527).

[539] G. Windengren, "Les origines et l'histoire des religions", in *Coll.*, pp. 28–60. However, the author is close to Reitzenstein's old theories and states that the Essenes were influenced by Iranian ideas. An energetic refutation of Essene gnosticism is given by Menahem Mansoor ("The Nature of Gnosticism in Qumran", in *Coll.*, pp. 384–400).

[540] Gershom G. Sholem, *Le origini della Kabbalà*, Bologna 1973. In ninth-century Spain, the Kabbalà's centre was Gerona in Catalonia. It should be noted that the Masons often refer to this period of gnosticism as their ideal model. Hence T. M. Stewart accuses the Christians of having killed the philosopher Hypatia in the times of Saint Cyril, because she was one of the initiated. Gnosticism, according to this author, survived Christianity with the Albigenses and the Kabbalà (Rose Cross of the fifteenth century). Cfr. Leon De Poncins, *Christianisme et F.M.*, 1969.

[541] J. Doresse, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

[542] The *Oracula Chaldaica* was read by the neo-Platonists, and expecially by Proclus (cfr. W. Theiler, "Die Chaldäischen Orakel und die Hymnen des Synesios", in *Forschungene zum Neuplatonismus*, Berlin 1966, pp. 252–304). We should also mention the so-called Sybillinic literature, which contributed to create an atmosphere of eschtological anticipation and a religious mentality before the changes of history. The literature traces its origin to the so-called Sybills", or women who were interrogated by followers of various religions about the future of particular persons or history in general. There was a Sybil in Delphi from remote times, named Pythias. Through her, other women supposedly received prophetic qualities from the god Apollo. Hence at a certain point in history, Delphi was a place where women were consecrated as Sybils. In ancient times there were 17 places; hence the Sybils of Erithrea (from Erithre in Asia Minor) Phrígia Ephesus and Rhodes. In Italy there were the Cumana (immortalised by Virgil), Tiburtine and Cimmeria Sybils. There was also a Lybian, Persian and Chaldean one (the latter also called Babylonian, the daughter of Berosus). The pagan and Judaic world attributed the power to announce the future to these and subsequent prophetesses. Among the Jews, Sybilic literature (or the invention of prophesies) seems to have begun around 160 B.C., above all through the efforts of Aristobulus, a Jew from Alexandria. In the second century A.D., they were joined by persecuted Christians, who wrote terrifying prophesies about the demise of Rome. All this material was used by serious authors, such as Lactantius, and became a subject of private readings or anti-Roman clubs until the sixth century A.D., It was in this century that an anonymous Byzantine prepared a purged edition of these prophesies, which has been preserved in Latin and Greek

manuscripts from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This edition is a collection of 4200 Greek exametres, divided into 14 books containing "revelations" of various types and distributed in a chaotic and unarticulated fashion. On this problem, cfr. M. Erbetta, *Gli Apocrifi del Nuovo Testamento, Lettere e Apocalissi* III, Turin 1969, pp. 487–547. For example, in Book VIII (written around 70 A.D.) we read these prophesies on Rome: "Then everything will cry . . . O proud woman, O progeny of Latin Rome, no longer will your arrogance bring you fame. No more, unhappy one, will you rise, but you will remain prostrate. The glory of the legions carrying the eagle will fall. Where, then, is your force? Who is your ally? Who have you in your vanity have enslaved, without right or law? There will be confusion among the inhabitants of the globe, when the Omnipotent appears on His throne to judge . . . "(*Ibid.*, p. 513).From these and other menacing prophesies, we can deduce Gnosticism's Judaic origin, which was also expressed by pagans in the form of anti-Roman Sybilinic leterature. Hatred of God and hatred of the Romans are the two themes of second- and third-century A.D. gnosticism.

[543] This is a step forward compared with Püch's conclusions ("L 'universo degli Gnostici", in *Antologia della critica filosofica* I, *L 'età antica*, Bari 1961, pp. 418–425). According to Püch, Manicheism was an Iranian religion with Buddhist influences, Mandeism was a Baptist religion (perhaps from pre-Christian times), and Jewish Gnostics were numerous and spread throughout the West; I agree about Mandeism, but Manicheism seems to be pervaded more by Gnosticism than by Iranian dualism. Cfr. Erbetta, *op. cit.*, p. 543. In fact, the Manicheans used a variety of apocryphal Gospels.

[544] Claudio Mareschini, *Apuleio e il Platonismo*, Florence 1978, Apuleius wrote *De Platone et eius dogmate* and *De mundo.*

[545] G. Reale, *op cit.*, volume IV, pp. 315–318, Therefore, the author calls Middle Platonism "ecumenical"; cfr. G. Invernizzi, *Il Didaskaleion di Albino e il medioplatonismo*, Rome 1975. This author however states that Middle Platonism is not dependent on Antioch of Ascalon.

[546] Cfr. W. Theiler, "Ammonios der Lehrer des Origines", in *Forschungen zum Neuplatonismus*, pp. 1–45. The subject is complicated, because Origen abandoned Ammonius in 231, while in 232 Plotinus became Ammonius' disciple. Hence Cadiou's conviction (*La jeunesse d'Origène*, Paris 1935) that there was one Ammonius. Santino Caramella ("Il cristianesmo di Ammonio Sacca", in *Nuovo Didaskaleion* II (1948), pp. 6–70) distinguishes two Origens. Carmelo Elorduy ("Ammonio, La leyenda de su apostasia", in *Pensamiento* III (1947), pp. 5 ff.) believes that there was one Ammonius, and that his apostasy was a legend invented by Porphyry. However, this is rejected by G. Reale (*Storia* . . . , Volume IV, p. 462). As can be seen, we are in the dark on this matter.

[547] G. Reale *op. cit.*, Volume IV, p. 469.

[548] According to J. Rist, the city hosted the veterans of Pannony, but under the rule of philosophers, However, a mix of old soldiers and calm philosophers, seems unattainable to Gallien (*op. cit.*, pp. 171–173).

[549] M. de Corte, *Aristote et Plotin*, Paris 1935; Santino Caramella, *La filosofia di Plotino e il neo-platonismo*, Catania 1942. It should be mentioned that Plotinus was also well-versed in geometry, mechanics and optics, although he did not see fit to write anything on these subjects (*Life*, 14).

[550] Plotinus was accused by Longinus and the Athenian group of plagiarism and of repeating Numenius. The accusation was refuted by Porphyry, but it was grave, as we can see from Porphyry's copious and detailed documentation (*Life*, 17 ff.). We should mention that, according to E. Brehier (*Plotin*, second edition, Paris 1961), some of Plotinus' doctrines were Buddhist. However, this has been rejected by A. H. Armstrong, *The Architecture of the Intelligible Universe in the Philosophy of Plotinus*, Amsterdam 1967.

[551] According to Feibleman, Plotinus disagrees with Plato: a) in the "procession" of the hypostases; b) in the doctrine according to which the ideas are divine thoughts; c) that matter is the principle of evil; d) in his mystical individualism, which is opposed to the civil man in Plato who reaches his perfection in the Greek "polis" (*op. cit.*, pp. 149 ff.). In short, Plato is a dualist, while Plotinus has a tendency to monism.

[552] Valerio Verra, *Dialettica e Filosofia in Plotino*, Trieste 1962, p. 57.

[553] G. Capone Braga, *Il mondo delle idee, I problemi fondamentali del platonismo nella storia della filosofia*, second edition, Milan 1953, p. 168. Verra establishes an opportune comparison between Plotinian and Hegelian dialectics. Hegel requires time and the negation of contraries. Time, in fact, is a place where contraries operate. There is no time in Plotinus. there is no negation, but a resolution of the parts (p. 61). Cfr. M. De Corte, *op. cit.*, p. 232; Philip Merlan, *From Platonism to Neo-Platonism*, The Hague 1953.

[554] There is a debate among historians on whether one must prefer the word "procession" over the word "emanation", as J. Trouillard teaches (*La procession plotinienne*, Paris 1955). G. Reale excludes every form of "emanation" (Volume IV, p. 483, 608–609), because Plotinian philosophy is not eastern (Indian or Persian) and has nothing to do with Gnostic emanation. However, Luigi Pelloux (*L'assoluto nel pensiero di Plotino*, Milan 1941) does not hesitate to speak of emanation in the strict sense. Giovanni Reale excludes eastern emanationism, along with any form of pantheism or creationism. In his opinion, this is based on the fact that the One is present in all with his "potency", or efficiency ("dynamis"), or cause, but not as an entity. The author dissents from Zeller's interpretation of "dynamic pantheism".

[555] According to Pelloux, the translation of the Greek word "noûs" with the

modern equivalent of "spirit" would be more appropriate (proposed by W. R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, London 1929, third edition).

[556] This teaching, later abandoned by Proclus and Syrianus, was particularly dear to Plotinus. One day Porphyry entered the school with notes demonstrating that the intelligibles had to be placed outside the intellect. Smiling, Plotinus heard the student out, and then turned to Amelius and said, "It is your job, Amelius, to resolve the difficulties he has encountered through an ignorance of our opinions" (*Life*, 18). These objections were also proposed by Longinus, who taught in Athens.

[557] V. Verra, *op. cit.*, pp. 35–36.

[558] G. Capone Braga, against Covotti, Zeller and Heinemann, who believed in an explicit co-presence of the individual ideas.

[559] Maria Luisa Gatti, *Plotino e la metafisica delle contemplazione*, Milan 1982, pp. 24–26. Plotinus used the verb "to look" ("blépein") for the One, and the verb "to see" ("theoreîn") for the intellect.

[560] The theory of "intelligible matter" is a misunderstanding of Aristotle (*Metaphysics*, 1059 b 12–13), for whom matter is mathematical extension. Instead, Plotinus considered it a positive entity. In the Scholastic Middle Ages, this theory was the origin of universal hylemorphism.

[561] Cfr. Bruno Salmona, *La libertà in Plotino*, Milan 1967, p. 20.

[562] L. Salmona, *op. cit.*, pp. 35 ff.; V. Cilento, "La radice della libertà nell 'antignosi plotiniana", in *La parola del passato*, 1963, p. 113.

[563] G. Carrière, "La katharsis plotinienne", in *Divus Thomas* LIV (1951), pp. 197–204, Purification implies three complementary aspects: a) simplification and isolation; b) affective and intentional detachment from the body; c) total spoliation ("khorismós").

[564] Maria Luisa Gatti, *op. cit.*, pp. 142–146. Plotinus had to take into consideration the "Platonic eros", but he disentangled himself from this problem in an unclear fashion. He admits that there are "erotes" motives for the many souls suspended in Beauty. However, he found difficulty in determining their metaphysical grade.

[565] John M. Rist, *Eros and Psyche*, pp. 169–191; E. Krakowski, Plotin, Paris 1953, pp. 156–175. The author observes that the mystic dominates over the aesthetist, and even over the philosopher, because the dialectic problem transforms itself into soteriology, and philosophy transforms itself into religion.

[566] W. Theiler, *Forschungen zum neuplatonismus*, pp. 202–263, in the chapter dedicated to Plotinus and Saint Augustine. The author, in forcing his thesis, tries to demonstrate (against Courcelle and others) that Augustine's thought derives more from Porphyry than from Plotinus.

[567] The most recent studies (Larsen, Dillon) confirm Zeller's "a priori"

methods and Prächter's correct interpretative intuitions. Prächter distinguishes three post-Plotinian currents: speculative (Porphyry, the School of Syria and the School of Athens), theurgic (School of Pergamus) and erudite (School of Alexandria and of Rome); cfr. G. Reale, *op. cit.*, Volume IV, pp. 623–624.

[568] K. Prächter, *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie* I, twelfth edition, Berlin 1926, p. 666, where we find a discussion of the succession of Scholarchs and the open problem of the lack of data on some first-century B.C. schools.

[569] Henri Irenée Marrou, "Sinesio di Cirene e il neo-platonismo alessandrino", in Aa. Vv., *Il conflitto tra paganesimo e cristianesimo nel secolo IV*, Turin 1968, p. 149.

[570] *Ibid.*, p. 149; Theo Kobusch, *Studium zur Philosophie des Hierocles von Alexandrien*, Munich 1976.

[571] Ammonius of Hermeias followed Proclus to Athens in 480, but upon his return to Alexandria he became the leader of a school which produced Philoponus, Olympiodorus, Simplicius and Elias. Yvan Pellettier translated Ammonius' commentary on Aristotle's Categories into French (*Les attributions* Catégories, *Le texte aristotelicienne, et les prolegomènes d'Ammonios d'Hermeias*, Paris 1983).

[572] Praetextatus was part of the anti-Christian party, which around the end of the fourth century sought to re-establish the old pagan religion. Cfr. Herbert Bloch, "La rinascita pagana in Occidente alla fine del secolo IV", in Aa. Vv., *Il conflitto . . .*, *op. cit.*, pp. 201–224. Theodosius brought an end to the resistance of Roman Senate, which remained mostly pagan until the fifth century.

[573] Herbert Bloch, *art cit.*, p. 219. The author has reservations about accepting the implacable invective of Ammianus Marcellinus regarding the culture of the senatorial class and of fourth-century Roman nobility.

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